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TO THE READER.

CERTAINLY that man were greedy of life who should desire to live when all the world were at an end, and he must needs be very impatient who would repine at death in the society of all things that suffer under it. Had not almost every man suffered by the press, or were not the tyranny thereof become universal, I had not wanted reason for complaint; but in times wherein I have lived to behold the highest perversion of that excellent invention; the name of his Majesty defamed, the honour of parliament depraved, the writings of both depravedly, anticipatively, counterfeitly imprinted; complaints may seem ridiculous in private persons, and men of my condition may be as incapable of affronts as hopeless of their reparations. And truly had not the duty I owe unto the importunity of friends, and the allegiance I must ever acknowledge unto truth, prevailed with me, the inactivity of my disposition might have made these sufferings continual; and time, that brings other things to light, should have satisfied me in the remedy of its oblivion. But because things evidently false are not only printed, but many things of truth most falsely set forth, in this latter I could not but think myself engaged. For though we have no power to redress the former, yet in the other the reparation being within ourselves, I have at present

represented unto the world a full and intended copy of that piece which was most imperfectly and surreptitiously published before.

This I confess about seven years past, with some others of affinity thereto, for my private exercise and satisfaction I had at leisurable hours composed ; which being communicated unto one, it became common unto many, and was by transcription successively corrupted until it arrived in a most depraved copy at the press. He that shall peruse that work, and shall take notice of sundry particularities and personal expressions therein, will easily discern the intention was not publick ; and being a private exercise directed to myself, what is delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me, than an example or rule unto any other ; and therefore if there be any singularity therein correspondent unto the private conceptions of any man, it doth not advantage them, or if dissentaneous thereunto, it no way overthrows them. It was penned in such a place and with such disadvantage, that (I protest) from the first setting of pen unto paper I had not the assistance of any good book, whereby to promote my invention or relieve my memory ; and therefore there might be many real lapses therein, which others might take notice of, and more that I suspected myself. It was set down many years past, and was the sense of my conceptions at that time, not an immutable law unto my advancing judgment at all times ; and therefore there might be many things therein plausible unto my passed apprehension, which are not agreeable unto my present self. There are many things delivered rhetorically, many expressions therein merely tropical, and as they best illustrate my intention ; and therefore also there are

many things to be taken in a soft and flexible sense, and not to be called unto the rigid test of reason. Lastly, all that is contained therein is in submission unto maturer discernments ; and as I have declared, I shall no further farther them than the best and learned judgments shall authorize them ; under favour of which considerations I have made its secrecy publick, and committed the truth thereof to every ingenuous reader.

THOMAS BROWNE.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

IT is very remarkable that notwithstanding their close relationship these two Treatises by Sir Thomas Browne have never been linked together in the same volume until now. *RELIGIO MEDICI* was the earliest production of his pen ; that admirable Sequel *CHRISTIAN MORALS* the last which fell from it. It is delightful to perceive the perfect harmony that reigns in both works although well nigh half a century rolled away between the respective periods of their composition. The pure and lofty thoughts which dwelt in his heart in the pensive evening of life were but the same that the author had cherished and avowed in the bright morn of early manhood.

RELIGIO MEDICI was at first surreptitiously published, in 1642. Even in those ‘dissonant times’ (to use the gentle phrase of Harry Lawes who lived in them) this piece of serene wisdom found so many readers that two editions were immediately disposed of. It came out under the author’s sanction in the following year, and numerous reimpressions were called for in his lifetime. Some of his other works Sir Thomas Browne greatly altered and enlarged, but a majestic self-esteem led him to make no change whatever in this confession of faith after he had once delivered it to the world.

Its fate in one respect has been peculiarly untoward, for it has been constantly printed with great incorrect-

ness. A table of errata prefixed to the authentick edition of 1643, shows that it underwent a nice examination by the author; who seems thenceforward to have left the care of the press to others, by whom the trust was discharged with singular indiligence. The subsequent editions were printed without any reference having been made to that table! A few of the errors pointed out in it were occasionally detected; but many have been constantly overpassed which mar the author's meaning, and some that contradict and reverse it. The impression of 1682 (the year in which Sir T. B. died) is the faultiest of any, for it not only continues those important blunders but is deformed by many new ones. The latter have been avoided in the folio of 1686, but it leaves the others untouched. The reprint of 1736 cannot claim even this modified praise.*

So much care has been taken to banish the whole of these errors, as well as to weigh the irresolute punc-

* There have been three modern editions of *RELIGIO MEDICI*. The first of these was printed at Oxford in 1831. The editor states that "every former edition is so corrupt, and so full of errata, as in many places to be utterly unintelligible." But he himself never saw the table mentioned above, and he perpetuates errors which should have been cured by it.

The second modern edition appeared in the valuable collection of Sir Thomas Browne's Works printed at Norwich in 1835. Mr. Wilkin, the editor, candidly confesses that he did not discover until the last sheet had been worked off, that the errors enumerated in the table of 1643, had passed through every subsequent edition, his own included. He cancelled some, and gave an accurate account of the whole at the end of his preface.

The third was published in London in 1838. The editor did not consider it needful to undergo the fatigue of collating the earlier impressions; he has not even used the information he might have acquired so easily from Mr. Wilkin, but has been content with giving a tolerably faithful reprint of the worthless edition of 1682.

tuation of every previous edition, that the one now offered to the public may venture to claim the singular praise of being the first that presents with accuracy the text of a book which issued from the press two hundred years ago.

Doubtless this work of an original thinker may afford room for annotations; yet it is hoped there will be no irreverence in divesting it of those (equal to itself in bulk) by which it has been hitherto accompanied.* They have been reprinted often enough to be placed within the reach of any one who may be anxious to consult them, but their constant alliance with the text is unnecessary and uncomfortable. They are by no means entitled to keep company for ever with the tersely-written volume to which they have been tacked so long, for they are often composed in a vein quite repugnant to that of Sir Thomas Browne, and with a total forgetfulness of the caveat to be found at the end of his preface.

Every one acknowledges the luxury of possessing the text of a favourite author (the man who has no favourite books is incapable of friendship) without the clog of a commentary proceeding from different and perhaps uncongenial minds. In the wanderings of the eye from the author to his annotators we too often have that train of thought suddenly snapt in which he was profitably

* Though diffuse they are omission, and sometimes charge Sir Thomas Browne (as he elsewhere tells us) with borrowing from books which he never read. Sir Kenelm Digby's Observations were occasioned by the corrupt and surreptitious edition, and often have no application to the genuine one. They were accordingly denounced therein as hasty and erroneous, and as intended to exhibit the conceptions of the observator rather than to illustrate those of the author.

leading us,* or we regale upon some frigid criticism which makes nothing manifest but the reluctance dull men feel to let a man of genius express himself after his own fashion. Surely he who wrote *RELIGIO MEDICI* has attained the dignity of a classic, and well deserves to have his pure gold presented to us unmixt with baser matter.

This is one of the books which give pleasing evidence of the stability of our language for the two last centuries. The thoughts of Sir Thomas Browne, profound and original as they are, and notwithstanding the out o' the way-ness of his expressions, may be apprehended as readily now as when they were first poured forth ; and this noble creature who wrote ‘not for an age, but for all time,’ is quite as perspicuous as some whom we call (by the happiest phrase in the world) writers of *THE DAY.*

We have the testimony of Sir Thomas's daughter that ‘*CHRISTIAN MORALS* was the last work of her honoured and learned father.’ It must be added with regret, for the fact is not to the credit of his countrymen, that two editions sufficed for more than a century. The first was faithfully published from the original manuscript, in 1716, by Dr. John Jeffery, Archdeacon of Norwich ; the second in 1756, by Dr. Samuel Johnson ; who enriched it with a life of the author and some short ex-

* The more we read the more perplexed,
The comment ruining the text.

The few notes which will be found in this edition of *RELIGIO MEDICI* and *CHRISTIAN MORALS* are the author's own.

planatory notes. For the next we are indebted to Mr. Wilkin in 1835.*

Although the greater part of this work is preceptive, yet in some of its later sections the meek and venerable man doffs the teacher's gown, and gives us again glimpses of that sweet character which he had in part unveiled before, and whose *entire* disclosure makes this piece of mental biography one of the most curious and interesting books in our language. The twenty-second section (the longest in *CHRISTIAN MORALS*) is irresistibly touching when viewed in this personal light; and it will be difficult to see it in any other, if with the opening words "In seventy or eighty years a man may have a deep gust of the world," we combine the recollection that he who wrote them was then between seventy and eighty years of age.

There is another passage among the outpourings of this more stately Montaigne which I can never read without applying the close of it to himself, although he whom the compellation of *little flock* did deject on account of his own unworthiness, may have thought of no one less than of himself when it dropt from his pen:—
"Though human souls are said to be equal, yet is there no small inequality in their operations; some maintain the allowable station of men, many are far below it; AND SOME HAVE BEEN SO DIVINE AS TO APPROACH THE APOGEUM OF THEIR NATURES, AND TO BE IN THE CONFINIUM OF SPIRITS."†

In lieu of the accompaniments withheld from the present edition of *RELIGIO MEDICI* others are substituted

* It is printed in the *fourth* volume of his edition of Sir Thomas Browne's Works. *RELIGIO MEDICI* appears in the *second*.

† See pp. 182, 187.

whose utility it is hoped may not be questioned. Neither that work nor its sequel *CHRISTIAN MORALS* is severely methodical: it is the more desirable therefore that the substance of the several divisions of each should be indicated, that the reader might be put in possession of a brief abstract of the volume by which he may be enabled to recur to particular portions of it with facility. The editor has adhered in these tables to the language of his author; but it was often found difficult (and sometimes impossible) to express in a line or two the contents of sections so laden with thought as those of Sir Thomas Browne.

They are likewise studded with forcible and remarkable words, which may perhaps be advantageously pointed out by an Index. That which has been prepared is not confined to peculiar and uncommon terms, but embraces familiar ones whenever they are employed in a peculiar sense or in some unwonted construction. One of the chief advantages of a dictionary may be said to lie in the examples it affords of the sense in which words have been used by the best writers. As this adjunct of the present edition will lead to a great number of striking passages in these Contemplations which have not been adduced either by Dr. Johnson or Mr. Richardson, it may be found to serve as an exemplary supplement to our two principal lexicographers. Probably none who have felt the comfort of a full index, or the misery of a lank one, will be inclined to murmur at the somewhat unusual copiousness of that which is here offered to their acceptance.

Like most writers of his time Sir Thomas Browne was capricious or careless in regard to orthography. That of the two lexicographers just mentioned has

therefore been followed, whose agreement upon this point seems to offer at length a convenient and desirable standard whereby to regulate what was once so tormentingly precarious.

Few men with a pen in their hand are more innocently employed than he who is engaged in re-editing a good old book. It may save him perchance from adding a new and needless one to the swarms already existing "that serve only to distract weaker judgments, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers."* The pleasant task which I have just accomplished has brought its own reward by making me better acquainted with this volume of up-raising ethicks. If I should be instrumental in causing it to be more generally read than heretofore that circumstance will bring with it fresh matter of grateful remembrance.

JOHN PEACE.

- City Library, Bristol,
New Year's Day, 1844.

* REL. MED. p. 46. Or it may be a safe way of adopting, without arrogancy, the counsel of Lord Bacon:—"For the opinion of plenty is among the causes of want, and the great quantity of books maketh a show rather of superfluity than lack; which surcharge, nevertheless, is not to be remedied by making no more books, but by making more good books, which as the serpent of Moses might devour the serpents of the enchanters."—*Advancement of Learning*, book ii.

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Religio Medici.



RELIGIO MEDICI.

I. FOR my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all, as the general scandal of my profession, the natural course of my studies, the indifference of my behaviour and discourse in matters of religion, neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardour and contention opposing another; yet in despite hereof I dare, without usurpation, assume the honourable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font, my education, or clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country; but having in my riper years and confirmed judgment seen and examined all, I find myself obliged by the principles of grace, and the law of mine own reason, to embrace no other name but this: neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, Infidels, and (what is worse) Jews; rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style, than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

II. But because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith, there being a geography of religion as well as lands, and every clime distinguished not only by their laws and limits, but circumscribed by their doctrines and rules of faith ; to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion, wherein I dislike nothing but the name ; of the same belief our Saviour taught, the apostles disseminated, the fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed ; but by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times, so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hand of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person by whom so good a work was set on foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fills me with wonder, and is the very same objection the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

III. Yet have I not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions, who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom than bring her in to be new trimmed in the dock ; who had rather promiscuously retain all than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are than what they have been, as to stand in diameter and sword's point with them : we have reformed from them, not against them ; for omitting those impropriations and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both ; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live

with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them, or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator any where, especially in places devoted to his service; where if their devotions offend him, mine may please him, if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy-water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all: I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition; my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behaviour full of rigour, sometimes not without morosity; yet at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church, nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross or crucifix I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Saviour; I cannot laugh at, but rather pity the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstance, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell* without

* A church bell that tolls every day at six and twelve of the clock; at the hearing whereof every one in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin.

out an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectified the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own: at a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an access of scorn and laughter. There are questionless both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use, and stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look askant on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist in the narrow point and centre of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

IV. As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformations; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest, together with their constitution and clime inclined them; some angrily and with extremity, others calmly and with mediocrity, not rending but easily dividing the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation; which though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes, their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion, may with the same hopes expect an union in the poles of heaven.

V. But to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle; there is no church whose every part so

squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs seem so consonant unto reason, and as it were framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief, the Church of England ; to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore in a double obligation subscribe unto her articles, and endeavour to observe her constitutions ; whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe according to the rules of my private reason, or the humour or fashion of my devotion ; neither believing this, because Luther affirmed it, or disapproving that, because Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the council of Trent, nor approve all in the synod of Dort. In brief, where the Scripture is silent the church is my text ; where that speaks, 'tis but my comment ; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but the dictates of mine own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries, and a gross error in ourselves, to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth, who though he rejected the pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and assayed in ages past, and 'twas conceived the state of Venice would have attempted in our days. It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurribilities and opprobrious scoffs of the Bishop of Rome, to whom as a temporal prince we owe the duty of good language. I confess there is a cause of passion between us ; by his sentence I stand excommunicated, heretic is the best language he affords me ; yet can no ear witness I ever returned to him the name of antichrist, man of sin, or whore of Babylon. It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction ;

those usual satires, and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetorick than logick ; yet do they in no wise confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not to be patroned by a passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

VI. I could never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which perhaps within a few days I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion, and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage : where we desire to be informed 'tis good to contest with men above ourselves ; but to confirm and establish our opinions 'tis best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity ; many, from the ignorance of these maxims, and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error, and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender ; 'tis therefore far better to enjoy her with peace, than to hazard her on a battle : if therefore there rise any doubts in my way I do forget them, or at least defer them, till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve them ; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best OEdipus, and will upon a reasonable truce find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the

subtleties of error have enchain'd our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems double faced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself; but in divinity I love to keep the road; and though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move, not reserving any proper poles or motion from the epicycle of my own brain: by this means I leave no gap for heresy, schisms, or errors, of which at present I hope I shall not injure truth to say I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three, not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine; for indeed heresies perish not with their authors, but like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy; it may be cancelled for the present, but revolution of time and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again; for as though there were a metempsuchosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again we need not look for Plato's year.* Every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogenes, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again, the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none

* A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school as when he delivered this opinion.

then but there hath been some one since that parallels him, and is as it were his revived self.

VII. Now the first of mine was that of the Arabians, that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day: not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul; but if that were, which faith, not philosophy, hath yet throughly disproved, and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it should rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarum: a serious reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul; so I might enjoy my Saviour at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen; that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever; but after a definite time of his wrath he would release the damned souls from torture: which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God his Mercy; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme of despair, whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth and not offensive to my religion, and that is the prayer for the dead; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an oraison for his soul: 'twas a good way me-thought to be remembered by posterity, and far more

noble than an history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity, or endeavoured to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed or disputed them with my dearest friends; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself, but suffering them to flame upon their own substance without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves: therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also; this was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer, who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, as well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

VIII. That heresies should arise we have the prophecy of Christ; but that old ones should be abolished we hold no prediction. That there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other; even in doctrines heretical there will be super-heresies; and Arians not only divided from their church, but also among themselves: for heads that are disposed unto schism and complexionably propense to innovation, are naturally indisposed for a community, nor will ever be confined unto the order or economy of one body; and therefore when they separate from others they knit but loosely among themselves; nor contented with a gene-

ral breach or dichotomy with their church, do subdivide and mince themselves almost into atoms. 'Tis true, that men of singular parts and humours have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages; retaining something not only beside the opinion of their own church or any other, but also any particular author; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy; for there is yet, after all the decrees of councils and the niceties of the schools, many things untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of an heresy.

IX. As for those wingy mysteries in divinity and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the piamater of mine; methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion, for an active faith; the deepest mysteries ours contains, have not only been illustrated, but maintained by syllogism and the rule of reason: I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo!* 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity, with incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, *certum est quia impossibile est*. I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre, and when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now contrarily I bless myself, and am thankful that I lived not in the days of miracles, that I never saw Christ nor his disciples; I would not have been

one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom he wrought his wonders; then had my faith been thrust upon me, nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief to credit what our eye and sense hath examined; I believe he was dead and buried, and rose again; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph, or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history: they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before his coming, who upon obscure prophecies and mystical types could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

X. 'Tis true there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say the sword of faith; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the apostle gives it, a buckler; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know we know nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith; I am now content to understand a mystery without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonick description. That allegorical description of Hermes* pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines; where I cannot satisfy my reason I love to humour my fancy: I had as lieve you tell me that *anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei*, as *entelechia*; *lux est umbra Dei*, as *actus perspicui*; where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration; for by acquainting our reason

* Sphæra, cuius centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi.

how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtleties of faith ; and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though in the same chapter, when God forbids it, 'tis positively said the plants of the field were not yet grown ; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent (if we shall literally understand it) from his proper form and figure made his motion on his belly before the curse. I find the trial of the pucellage and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience, and history informs me, that not only many particular women, but likewise whole nations have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex ; yet do I believe that all this is true, which indeed my reason would persuade me to be false ; and this I think is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

XI. In my solitary and retired imagination,

(*Neque enim, cum lectulus, aut me
Porticus exceptit, desum mihi,*)

I remember I am not alone, and therefore forget not to contemplate him and his attributes who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity ; with the one I recreate, with the other I confound my understanding : for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstacy ? Time we may comprehend, 'tis but five days elder than

ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world; but to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning, to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary; my philosophy dares not say the angels can do it; God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him, 'tis the privilege of his own nature. I am that I am, was his own definition unto Moses; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask him what he was; indeed he only is; all others have and shall be, but in eternity there is no distinction of tenses; and therefore that terrible term, predestination, which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no precious determination of our estates to come, but a definite blast of his will already fulfilled, and at the instant that he first decreed it; for to his eternity, which is indivisible and all together, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly when he saith, a thousand years to God are but as one day; for to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time which flow into a thousand years, make not to him one moment; what to us is to come, to his eternity is present, his whole duration being but one permanent point without succession, parts, flux, or division.

XII. There is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities; his

similitude of a triangle comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls, and that the triple unity of God; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of souls, because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can and do subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are so united as to make but one soul and substance: if one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity; conceive the distinct number of three, not divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret magick of numbers; beware of philosophy, is a precept not to be received in too large a sense; for in this mass of nature there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity, which to wiser reasons serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and to judicious beliefs, as scales and roundles to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity. The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some more real substance in that invisible fabrick.

XIII. That other attribute wherewith I recreate my devotion, is his wisdom, in which I am happy; and for the contemplation of this only, do not repent me that I was bred in the way of study: the advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompence for all my endeavours, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is his

most beauteous attribute, no man can attain unto it, yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise because he knows all things, and he knoweth all things because he made them all; but his greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honour my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself; had he read such a lecture in paradise as he did at Delphos,* we had better known ourselves, nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know he is wise in all, wonderful in what we conceive, but far more in what we comprehend not; for we behold him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow; our understanding is dimmer than Moses' eye, we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of his divinity. Therefore to pry into the maze of his counsels, is not only folly in man, but presumption even in angels; like us, they are his servants not his senators; he holds no council but that mystical one of the Trinity, wherein though there be three Persons, there is but one mind, that decrees without contradiction; nor needs he any, his actions are not begot with deliberation, his wisdom naturally knows what is best; his intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness; consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in him; his actions springing from his power, at the first touch of his will. These are contemplations metaphysical; my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions he hath left in his creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger

* Τυῶθι σεαυτὸν. *Nosce te ipsum.*

to profound these mysteries, no *sanctum sanctorum* in philosophy; the world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man; 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts; without this the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works; those highly magnify him, whose judicious inquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore—

Search while thou wilt, and let thy reason go
To ransom truth e'en to th' abyss below;
Rally the scattered causes, and that line
Which nature twists, be able to untwine;
It is thy Maker's will, for unto none
But unto reason can he e'er be known.
The devils do know thee, but those damned meteours
Build not thy glory, but confound thy creatures.
Teach my endeavours so thy works to read,
That learning them, in thee I may proceed.
Give thou my reason that instructive flight,
Whose weary wings may on thy hands still light;
Teach me to soar aloft, yet ever so,
When near the sun to stoop again below;
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,
And though near earth, more than the heavens discover.
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive
Rich with the spoils of nature to my hive,
There will I sit like that industrious fly,
Buzzing thy praises, which shall never die
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.

And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavour to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator; for if not he that sayeth, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of his Father, shall be saved, certainly our wills must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions; otherwise our pious labours shall find anxiety in their graves, and our best endeavours not hope but fear a resurrection.

XIV. There is but one first cause, and four second causes of all things; some are without efficient, as God; others without matter, as angels; some without form, as the first matter; but every essence created or un-created, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation; this is the cause I grope after in the works of nature, on this hangs the providence of God: to raise so beauteous a structure as the world and the creatures thereof, was but his art, but their sundry and divided operations with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of his wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation; but to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why his providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason and a diviner point of philosophy; therefore sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen his books *de usu partium*, as in Suarez' metaphysics: had Aristotle been as curious in the inquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

XV. *Natura nihil agit frustra*, is the only indis-

putable axiom in philosophy; there are no grotesques in nature, nor any thing framed to fill up empty cantons, and unnecessary spaces; in the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are everywhere where the power of the sun is, in these is the wisdom of his hand discovered; out of this rank Solomon chose the object of his admiration; indeed what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries and camels; these, I confess, are the colossus and majestick pieces of her hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematicks, and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regio-Montanus his fly beyond his eagle? or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies, than but one in the trunk of a cedar? I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature, which without further travel I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us; there is all Africa and her prodigies in us; we are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies, wisely learns in a compendium what others labour at in a divided piece and endless volume.

XVI. Thus there are two books from whence I col-

lect my divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant nature, that universal and publick manuscript that lies exparsed unto the eyes of all; those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other: this was the scripture and theology of the heathens; the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him, than its supernatural station did the children of Israel; the ordinary effect of nature wrought more admiration in them, than in the other all his miracles; surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphicks, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature; which I define not with the schools, the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty from that voice which first gave it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts, but like an excellent artist hath so contrived his work, that with the selfsame instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a wood; preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created; for God is like a skilful geometrician, who when more easily and with one stroke of his compass he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a

circle or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art; yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power and conclude he could not: and thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her, is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writing. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind or species of creature whatsoever; I cannot tell by what logick we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express those actions of their inward forms, and having past that general visitation of God who saw that all that he had made was good, that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity, wherein notwithstanding there is a kind of beauty, nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabrick. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or misshapen but the chaos; wherein notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form, nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art nor art with nature, they being both the servants of his providence; art is the perfection of nature; were the world now as

it was in the sixth day, there were yet a chaos; nature hath made one world and art another. In brief, all things are artificial, for nature is the art of God.

XVII. This is the ordinary and open way of his providence, which art and industry have in a good part discovered, whose effects we may foretell without an oracle; to foreshow these, is not prophecy but prognostication. There is another way full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides, and that is a more particular and obscure method of his providence, directing the operations of individuals and single essences; this we call fortune, that serpentine and crooked line whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends, in a more unknown and secret way. This cryptick and involved method of his providence have I ever admired, nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes of dangers and hits of chance, with a *Bezo las Manos* to fortune, or a bare gramercy to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident; human reason would have said that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter; what a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph, able to convert a stoick! Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings and wrenches, which pass awhile under the effects of chance, but at the last well examined prove the mere hand of God. 'Twas not dumb chance, that to discover the fougade or powder-plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of 88. the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonour and the partiality of fortune, to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did

not detract from the nation when he said he sent his armado to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds. Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superiour; but when unexpected accidents slip in and unthought-of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we behold the hand but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the grand Segniour proudly said that if they should trouble him as they did the Spaniard he would send his men with shovels and pickaxes and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but to the mercy of God that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of his providence that dispensemeth her favour to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, which must obey the swing of that wheel not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates arise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives not only of men, but of commonweals and the whole world, run not upon an helix that still enlargeth, but on a circle; where arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity and fall under the horizon again.

XVIII. These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune, but in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's rea-

son that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God; for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way, nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superiour cause. 'Tis not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for even in sortilegies and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune; because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that fools only are fortunate; or that insolent paradox, that a wise man is out of the reach of fortune; much less those opprobrious epithets of poets, whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'Tis, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments, who throughly understand the justice of this proceeding, and being enriched with higher donatives cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, nor to be content with the goods of mind without a possession of those of body or fortune: and it is an error worse than heresy to adore these complemental and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy the favours of fortune; let providence provide for fools; 'tis not partiality but equity in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents; those that are able of body

and mind, he leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits he imparts a larger portion, and pieces out the defect of one by the access of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures, being provided with reason that can supply them all. We need not labour with so many arguments to confute judicial astrology, for if there be a truth therein it doth not injure divinity; if to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty, under Jupiter to be wealthy, I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity unto such benevolous aspects. Those that held that all things were governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there; the Romans that erected a temple to fortune acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for in a wise supputation all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logick may conjoin heaven and earth in one argument, and with less than a sorites resolve all things into God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concourse though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit by which each singular essence not only subsists but performs its operation.

XIX. The bad construction and perverse comment on these pair of second causes, or visible hands of God, have perverted the devotion of many unto atheism; who forgetting the honest advisoes of faith, have listened unto the conspiracy of passion and reason: I

have therefore always endeavoured to compose those feuds and angry dissensions between affection, faith, and reason; for there is in our soul a kind of triumvirate, or triple government of three competitors, which distract the peace of this our commonwealth not less than did that other the state of Rome.

As reason is a rebel unto faith, so passion unto reason; as the propositions of faith seem absurd unto reason, so the theorems of reason unto passion, and both [reason and passion] unto [faith;] yet a moderate and peaceable discretion may so state and order the matter, that they may be all kings and yet make but one monarchy, every one exercising his sovereignty and prerogative in a due time and place, according to the restraint and limit of circumstance. There is, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself, which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture but on my knees. For our endeavours are not only to combat with doubts, but always to dispute with the devil; the villainy of that spirit takes a hint of infidelity from our studies, and by demonstrating a naturality in one way makes us mistrust a miracle in another. Thus having perused the Archidoxis and read the secret sympathies of things, he would dissuade my belief from the miracle of the brazen serpent, make me conceit that image worked by sympathy, and was but an Egyptian trick to cure their diseases without a miracle. Again, having seen some experiments of bitumen, and having read far more of naphtha, he whispered to my curiosity the fire of the altar might be natural; and bid me mistrust a

miracle in Elias when he intrenched the altar round with water ; for that inflammable substance yields not easily unto water, but flames in the arms of its antagonist. And thus would he inveigle my belief to think the combustion of Sodom might be natural, and that there was an asphaltick and bituminous nature in that lake before the fire of Gomorrah. I know that manna is now plentifully gathered in Calabria, and Josephus tells me, in his days it was as plentiful in Arabia ; the devil therefore made the query, where was then the miracle in the days of Moses ? the Israelites saw but that in his time the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and yielding a pawn thought to gain a queen of me, taking advantage of my honest endeavours ; and whilst I laboured to raise the structure of my reason, he strived to undermine the edifice of my faith.

XX. Neither had these or any other ever such advantage of me as to incline me to any point of infidelity or desperate positions of atheism ; for I have been these many years of opinion there was never any. Those that held religion was the difference of man from beasts have spoken probably, and proceed upon a principle as inductive as the other. That doctrine of Epicurus, that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of his majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior creatures. That fatal necessity of the Stoicks, is nothing but the immutable law of his will. Those that heretofore denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, have been condemned but as hereticks ; and those that now deny our Saviour (though more than hereticks) are not so much as atheists ; for though

they deny two persons in the Trinity, they hold as we do, there is but one God.

That villain and secretary of hell that composed that miscreant piece of the three impostors, though divided from all religions, and was neither Jew, Turk, nor Christian, was not a positive atheist. I confess every country hath its Machiavel, every age its Lucian, whereof common heads must not hear, nor more advanced judgments too rashly venture on; it is the rhetorick of Satan, and may pervert a loose or prejudicate belief.

XXI. I confess I have perused them all, and can discover nothing that may startle a discreet belief; yet are there heads carried off with the wind and breath of such motives. I remember a doctor of physic in Italy, who could not perfectly believe the immortality of the soul, because Galen seemed to make a doubt thereof. With another I was familiarly acquainted in France, a divine and man of singular parts, that on the same point was so plunged and gravelled with three lines of Seneca,* that all our antidotes, drawn from both Scripture and philosophy, could not expel the poison of his error. There are a set of heads that can credit the relations of mariners, yet question the testimonies of St. Paul; and peremptorily maintain the traditions of Ælian or Pliny, yet in histories of Scripture raise queries and objections, believing no more than they can parallel in human authors. I confess there are in

* *Mors individua est noxia corpori*

Nec parcens animæ.

Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil.

Tota morimur, nullaque pars manet

Nostri.

Scripture stories that do exceed the fable of poets, and to a captious reader found like Garagantua or Bevis; search all the legends of times past, and the fabulous conceits of these present, and 'twill be hard to find one that deserves to carry the buckler unto Samson; yet is all this of an easy possibility, if we conceive a divine concourse or an influence but from the little finger of the Almighty. It is impossible that either in the discourse of man or in the infallible voice of God, to the weakness of our apprehensions, there should not appear irregularities, contradictions, and antinomies; myself could shew a catalogue of doubts never yet imagined nor questioned, as I know, which are not resolved at the first hearing; not fantastick queries or objections of air, for I cannot hear of atoms in divinity. I can read the history of the pigeon that was sent out of the ark, and returned no more, yet not question how she found out her mate that was left behind; that Lazarus was raised from the dead, yet not demand where in the interim his soul awaited; or raise a law-case, whether his heir might lawfully detain his inheritance bequeathed unto him by his death; and he, though restored to life, have no plea or title unto his former possessions. Whether Eve was framed out of the left side of Adam, I dispute not; because I stand not yet assured which is the right side of a man, or whether there be any such distinction in nature; that she was edified out of the rib of Adam I believe, yet raise no question who shall arise with that rib at the resurrection. Whether Adam was an hermaphrodite, as the rabbins contend upon the letter of the text; because it is contrary to reason there should be an hermaphrodite before there was a woman, or a composition of two

natures, before there was a second composed. Likewise, whether the world was created in autumn, summer, or the spring; because it was created in them all; for whatsoever sign the sun possesseth those four seasons are actually existent; it is the nature of this luminary to distinguish the several seasons of the year, all which it makes at one time in the whole earth, and successive in any part thereof. There are a bundle of curiosities, not only in philosophy but in divinity, proposed and discussed by men of most supposed abilities, which indeed are not worthy our vacant hours, much less our serious studies; pieces only fit to be placed in Pantagruel's library, or bound up with *Tartaretus de modo cacandi*.

XXII. These are niceties that become not those that peruse so serious a mystery. There are others more generally questioned and called to the bar, yet methinks of an easy and possible truth. 'Tis ridiculous to put off, or drown the general flood of Noah in that particular inundation of Deucalion; that there was a deluge once, seems not to me so great a miracle as that there is not one always. How all the kinds of creatures, not only in their own bulks, but with a competency of food and sustenance, might be preserved in one ark, and within the extent of three hundred cubits, to a reason that rightly examines it will appear very feasible. There is another secret, not contained in the Scripture, which is more hard to comprehend, and put the honest father to the refuge of a miracle; and that is, not only how the distinct pieces of the world and divided islands should be first planted by men, but inhabited by tigers, panthers, and bears. How America abounded with beasts of prey and noxious animals, yet contained not

in it that necessary creature, a horse, is very strange. By what passage those, not only birds, but dangerous and unwelcome beasts came over; how there be creatures there which are not found in this triple continent; all which must needs be strange unto us, that hold but one ark, and that the creatures began their progress from the mountains of Ararat. They who to salve this would make the deluge particular, proceed upon a principle that I can no way grant; not only upon the negative of Holy Scriptures, but of mine own reason, whereby I can make it probable that the world was as well peopled in the time of Noah as in ours; and fifteen hundred years to people the world as full a time for them as four thousand years since have been to us. There are other assertions and common tenents drawn from Scripture, and generally believed as Scripture, whereunto, notwithstanding, I would never betray the liberty of my reason. 'Tis a postulate to me, that Methusalem was the longest lived of all the children of Adam, and no man will be able to prove it; when from the process of the text I can manifest it may be otherwise. That Judas perished by hanging himself, there is no certainty in Scripture, though in one place it seems to affirm it, and by a doubtful word hath given occasion to translate it; yet in another place, in a more punctual description, it makes it improbable and seems to overthrow it. That our fathers, after the flood, erected the tower of Babel to preserve themselves against a second deluge is generally opinioned and believed, yet is there another intention of theirs expressed in Scripture; besides, it is improbable from the circumstance of the place, that is, a plain in the land of Shinar. These are no points of faith, and therefore may admit

a free dispute. There are yet others, and those familiarly concluded from the text, wherein (under favour) I see no consequence. The church of Rome confidently proves the opinion of tutelary angels from that answer when Peter knockt at the door, It is not he, but his angel; that is, might some say, his messenger or some body from him; for so the original signifies, and is as likely to be the doubtful families meaning. This exposition I once suggested to a young divine that answered upon this point; to which I remember the Franciscan opponent replied no more but that it was a new and no authentick interpretation.

XXIII. These are but the conclusions and fallible discourses of man upon the word of God, for such I do believe the Holy Scriptures; yet were it of man, I could not choose but say it was the singularest, and superlative piece that hath been extant since the creation; were I a pagan I should not refrain the lecture of it; and cannot but commend the judgment of Ptolemy, that thought not his library complete without it. The Alcoran of the Turks (I speak without prejudice) is an ill-composed piece, containing in it vain and ridiculous errors in philosophy, impossibilities, fictions, and vanities beyond laughter, maintained by evident and open sophisms, the policy of ignorance, deposition of universities, and banishment of learning, that hath gotten foot by arms and violence; this without a blow hath disseminated itself through the whole earth. It is not unremarkable what Philo first observed, that the law of Moses continued two thousand years without the least alteration; whereas we see the laws of other commonweals do alter with occasions; and even those that pretended their original from some divinity, to have

vanished without trace or memory. I believe besides Zoroaster there were divers that writ before Moses, who notwithstanding have suffered the common fate of time. Men's works have an age like themselves, and though they outlive their authors yet have they a stint and period to their duration; this only is a work too hard for the teeth of time, and cannot perish but in the general flames when all things shall confess their ashes.

XXIV. I have heard some with deep sighs lament the lost lines of Cicero; others with as many groans deplore the combustion of the library of Alexandria; for my own part, I think there be too many in the world, and could with patience behold the urn and ashes of the Vatican, could I with a few others recover the perished leaves of Solomon. I would not omit a copy of Enoch's pillars, had they many nearer authors than Josephus, or did not relish somewhat of the fable. Some men have written more than others have spoken; Pineda quotes more authors in one work than are necessary in a whole world.* Of those three great inventions in Germany there are two which are not without their incommodities, and 'tis disputable whether they exceed not their use and commodities. 'Tis not a melancholy utinam of mine own, but the desires of better heads, that there were a general synod; not to unite the incompatible difference of religion, but for the benefit of learning; to reduce it as it lay at first in a few and solid authors, and to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of rhapsodies begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgments of scho-

* Pineda, in his *Monarchia Ecclesiastica* quotes one thousand and forty authors.

lars, and to maintain the trade and mystery of typographers.

XXV. I cannot but wonder with what exceptions the Samaritans could confine their belief to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses. I am ashamed at the rabbinical interpretation of the Jews upon the Old Testament, as much as their defection from the New. And truly it is beyond wonder how that contemptible and degenerate issue of Jacob, once so devoted to ethnick superstition and so easily seduced to the idolatry of their neighbours, should now in such an obstinate and peremptory belief adhere unto their own doctrine, expect impossibilities, and in the face and eye of the church persist without the least hope of conversion; this is a vice in them that were a virtue in us; for obstinacy in a bad cause is but constancy in a good. And herein I must accuse those of my own religion; for there is not any of such a fugitive faith, such an unstable belief, as a Christian; none that do so oft transform themselves, not unto several shapes of Christianity and of the same species, but unto more unnatural and contrary forms, of Jew and Mahometan; that from the name of Saviour can descend to the bare term of prophet; and from an old belief that he is come, fall to a new expectation of his coming. It is the promise of Christ to make us all one flock; but how and when this union shall be, is as obscure to me as the last day. Of those four members of religion we hold a slender proportion; there are, I confess, some new additions, yet small to those which accrue to our adversaries, and those only drawn from the revolt of pagans, men but of negative impieties, and such as deny Christ but because they never heard of him;

but the religion of the Jew is expressly against the Christian, and the Mahometan against both. For the Turk, in the bulk he now stands, he is beyond all hope of conversion; if he fall asunder there may be conceived hopes, but not without strong improbabilities. The Jew is obstinate in all fortunes; the persecution of fifteen hundred years hath but confirmed them in their error; they have already endured whatsoever may be inflicted, and have suffered, in a bad cause, even to the condemnation of their enemies. Persecution is a bad and indirect way to plant religion; it hath been the unhappy method of angry devotions, not only to confirm honest religion, but wicked heresies and extravagant opinions. It was the first stone and basis of our faith; none can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valour of martyrs; for, to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude; those that are fetcht from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not oft-times so truly precedents of valour as audacity, and at the best attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. If we shall strictly examine the circumstances and requisites which Aristotle requires to true and perfect valour, we shall find the name only in his master Alexander, and as little in that Roman worthy Julius Cæsar; and if any in that easy and active way have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet in the passive and more terrible piece these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim the honour of that title. 'Tis not in the power of every honest faith to proceed thus far, or pass to heaven through the flames; every one hath it not in that full measure, nor in so audacious and resolute a temper, as to endure those terrible tests and

trials; who notwithstanding in a peaceable way do truly adore their Saviour, and have (no doubt) a faith acceptable in the eyes of God.

XXVI. Now as all that die in the war are not termed soldiers, so neither can I properly term all those that suffer in matters of religion, martyrs. The council of Constance condemns John Huss for an heretick, the stories of his own party style him a martyr; he must needs offend the divinity of both, that says he was neither the one nor the other. There are many (questionless) canonized on earth that shall never be saints in heaven; and have their names in histories and martyrologies; who in the eyes of God are not so perfect martyrs as was that wise heathen Socrates, that suffered on a fundamental point of religion, the unity of God. I have often pitied the miserable bishop that suffered in the cause of antipodes, yet cannot choose but accuse him of as much madness for exposing his living on such a trifile, as those of ignorance and folly that condemned him. I think my conscience will not give me the lie, if I say there are not many extant that in a noble way fear the face of death less than myself; yet from the moral duty I owe to the commandment of God, and the natural respects that I tender unto the conservation of my essence and being, I would not perish upon a ceremony, politick points, or indifference; nor is my belief of that untractable temper as not to bow at their obstacles, or connive at matters wherein there are not manifest impieties. The leaven therefore and ferment of all, not only civil but religious actions, is wisdom; without which, to commit ourselves to the flames is homicide, and (I fear) but to pass through one fire into another.

XXVII. That miracles are ceased I can neither prove nor absolutely deny, much less define the time and period of their cessation; that they survived Christ, is manifest upon the record of Scripture; that they outlived the apostles also, and were revived at the conversion of nations many years after, we cannot deny, if we shall not question those writers whose testimonies we do not controvert in points that make for our own opinions. Therefore that may have some truth in it that is reported by the Jesuits of their miracles in the Indies; I could wish it were true, or had any other testimony than their own pens; they may easily believe those miracles abroad who daily conceive a greater at home, the transmutation of those visible elements into the body and blood of our Saviour; for the conversion of water into wine, which he wrought in Cana, or what the devil would have had him done in the wilderness, of stones into bread, compared to this will scarce deserve the name of a miracle: though indeed, to speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another, they being the extraordinary effect of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility, and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle, not only to produce effects against or above nature, but before nature; and to create nature, as great a miracle, as to contradict or transcend her. We do too narrowly define the power of God, restraining it to our capacities. I hold that God can do all things; how he should work contradictions I do not understand, yet dare not therefore deny. I cannot see why the angel of God should question Esdras to recal the time past, if it were beyond his own power: or that God should pose mortality in that

which he was not able to perform himself. I will not say God cannot, but he will not perform many things which we plainly affirm he cannot; this I am sure is the mannerliest proposition, wherein notwithstanding I hold no paradox: for strictly, his power is the same with his will, and they both with all the rest do make but one God.

XXVIII. Therefore that miracles have been I do believe; that they may yet be wrought by the living I do not deny; but have no confidence in those which are fathered on the dead; and this hath ever made me suspect the efficacy of reliques, to examine the bones, question the habits and appertenances of saints, and even of Christ himself. I cannot conceive why the cross that Helena found, and whereon Christ himself died, should have power to restore others unto life. I excuse not Constantine from a fall off his horse, or a mischief from his enemies, upon the wearing those nails on his bridle which our Saviour bore upon the cross in his hands; I compute among your *piae fraudes*, nor many decrees before consecrated swords and roses, that which Baldwyn king of Jerusalem returned the Genovese for their cost and pains in his war, to wit, the ashes of John the Baptist. Those that hold the sanctity of their souls doth leave behind a tincture and sacred faculty on their bodies, speak naturally of miracles, and do not salve the doubt. Now one reason I tender so little devotion unto reliques is, I think, the slender and doubtful respect I have always held unto antiquities; for that indeed which I admire is far before antiquity, that is eternity, and that is God himself; who though he be styled the Ancient of days, cannot receive the adjunct of antiquity, who was before the

world, and shall be after it, yet is not older than it; for in his years there is no climacter; his duration is eternity, and far more venerable than antiquity.

XXIX. But above all things I wonder how the curiosity of wiser heads could pass that great and indisputable miracle, the cessation of oracles; and in what swoon their reasons lay, to content themselves and sit down with such a far-fetcht and ridiculous reason as Plutarch alledgedeth for it. The Jews that can believe the supernatural solstice of the sun in the days of Joshua, have yet the impudence to deny the eclipse, which every pagan confessed, at his death; but for this, it is evident beyond all contradiction, the devil himself confessed it.* Certainly it is not a warrantable curiosity to examine the verity of Scripture by the concordance of human history, or seek to confirm the chronicle of Hester or Daniel, by the authority of Magasthenes or Herodotus. I confess I have had an unhappy curiosity this way, till I laughed myself out of it with a piece of Justin, where he delivers that the children of Israel for being scabbed were banished out of Egypt. And truly since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeit shapes and deceitful wizards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come. Some have been of my opinion, and endeavoured to write the history of their own lives; wherein Moses hath outgone them all, and left not only the story of his life, but as some will have it, of his death also.

XXX. It is a riddle to me, how this story of oracles

* In his oracle to Augustus.

hath not wormed out of the world that doubtful conceit of spirits and witches ; how so many learned heads should so far forget their metaphysicks and destroy the ladder and scale of creatures, as to question the existence of spirits ; for my part I have ever believed, and do now know, that there are witches ; they that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits ; and are obliquely and upon consequence a sort, not of infidels, but atheists. Those that to confute their incredulity desire to see apparitions, shall questionless never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches ; the devil hath them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft, and to appear to them were but to convert them. Of all the delusions wherewith he deceives mortality, there is not any that puzzleth me more than the legerdemain of changelings ; I do not credit those transformations of reasonable creatures into beasts, or that the devil hath a power to transpeciate a man into a horse, who tempted Christ (as a trial of his divinity) to convert but stones into bread. I could believe that spirits use with man the act of carnality, and that in both sexes ; I conceive they may assume, steal, or contrive a body wherein there may be action enough to content decrepit lust, or passion to satisfy more active veneries ; yet in both without a possibility of generation ; and therefore that opinion that Antichrist should be born of the tribe of Dan by conjunction with the devil is ridiculous, and a conceit fitter for a rabbin than a Christian. I hold that the devil doth really possess some men, the spirit of melancholy others, the spirit of delusion others ; that as the devil is concealed and denied by some, so God and good angels are pretended

by others, whereof the late detection of the maid of Germany hath left a pregnant example.

XXXI. Again, I believe that all that use sorceries, incantations, and spells are not witches, or as we term them, magicians; I conceive there is a traditional magick, not learned immediately from the devil, but at second hand from his scholars; who having once the secret betrayed, are able, and do empirically practise without his advice, they both proceeding upon the principles of nature, where actives aptly conjoined to disposed passives will under any master produce their effects. Thus I think at first a great part of philosophy was witchcraft, which being afterward derived to one another, proved but philosophy, and was indeed no more but the honest effects of nature; what invented by us is philosophy, learned from him is magick. We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad angels. I could never pass that sentence of Paracelsus without an asterisk or annotation;* *Ascendens constellatum multa revelat querentibus magnalia naturæ, i. e. operi Dei.* I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelations of spirits, for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow natures on earth; and therefore believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognosticks which forerun the ruins of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of good angels, which more careless inquiries term but the effects of chance and nature.

XXXII. Now besides these particular and divided

* Thereby is meant our good angel, appointed us from our nativity.

spirits there may be (for aught I know) an universal and common spirit to the whole world. It was the opinion of Plato, and it is yet of the Hermetical philosophers; if there be a common nature that unites and ties the scattered and divided individuals into one species, why may there not be one that unites them all? However, I am sure there is a common spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is the Spirit of God, the fire and the scintillation of that noble and mighty essence, which is the life and radical heat of spirits, and those essences that know not the virtue of the sun; a fire quite contrary to the fire of hell. This is that gentle heat that brooded on the waters, and in six days hatched the world; this is that irradiation that dispels the mists of hell, the clouds of horrour, fear, sorrow, despair; and preserves the region of the mind in serenity; whosoever feels not the warm gale and gentle ventilation of this spirit (though I feel his pulse) I dare not say he lives; for truly without this, to me there is no heat under the tropick, nor any light though I dwelt in the body of the sun.

As when the labouring sun hath wrought his track
 Up to the top of lofty Cancer's back,
 The icy ocean cracks, the frozen pole
 Thaws with the heat of the celestial coal;
 So when thy absent beams begin t' impart
 Again a solstice on my frozen heart,
 My winter's o'er, my drooping spirits sing,
 And every part revives into a spring.
 But if thy quickening beams a while decline,
 And with their light bless not this orb of mine,
 A chilly frost surpriseth every member,
 And in the midst of June I feel December.
 O how this earthly temper doth debase
 The noble soul, in this her humble place!

Whose wingy nature ever doth aspire
To reach that place whence first it took its fire.
These flames I feel, which in my heart do dwell,
Are not thy beams, but take their fire from hell ;
O quench them all ! and let thy light divine
Be as the sun to this poor orb of mine,
And to thy sacred Spirit convert those fires,
Whose earthly fumes choke my devout aspires.

XXXIII. Therefore for spirits, I am so far from denying their existence, that I could easily believe that not only whole countries, but particular persons have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of the church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato ; there is no heresy in it, and if not manifestly defined in Scripture yet it is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life, and would serve as an hypothesis to salve many doubts whereof common philosophy affordeth no solution. Now if you demand my opinion and metaphysics of their natures, I confess them very shallow, most of them in a negative way, like that of God ; or in a comparative, between ourselves and fellow-creatures ; for there is in this universe a stair or manifest scale of creatures, rising not disorderly or in confusion, but with a comely method and proportion. Between creatures of mere existence and things of life, there is a large disproportion of nature ; between plants and animals or creatures of sense, a wider difference ; between them and man, a far greater ; and if the proportion hold on, between man and angels there should be yet a greater. We do not comprehend their natures who retain the first definition of Porphyry, and distinguish them from ourselves by immortality ; for before his fall, man also was immortal ; yet must we needs

affirm that he had a different essence from the angels ; having therefore no certain knowledge of their natures, 'tis no bad method of the schools, whatsoever perfection we find obscurely in ourselves, in a more complete and absolute way to ascribe unto them. I believe they have an extemporary knowledge, and upon the first motion of their reason do what we cannot without study or deliberation ; that they know things by their forms, and define by specifical difference what we describe by accidents and properties ; and therefore probabilities to us may be demonstrations unto them ; that they have knowledge not only of the specifical, but numerical forms of individuals, and understand by what reserved difference each single hypostasis (besides the relation to its species) becomes its numerical self. That as the soul hath a power to move the body it informs, so there's a faculty to move any, though inform none ; ours upon restraint of time, place, and distance ; but that invisible hand that conveyed Habakkuk to the lions' den, or Philip to Azotus, infringeth this rule, and hath a secret conveyance wherewith mortality is not acquainted. If they have that intuitive knowledge whereby as in reflexion they behold the thoughts of one another, I cannot peremptorily deny but they know a great part of ours. They that to refute the invocation of saints have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my opinion till I can throughly answer that piece of Scripture, at the conversion of a sinner the angels in heaven rejoice. I cannot with those in that great father securely interpret the work of the first day, *fiat lux*, to the creation of angels, though, I confess, there is not any creature that hath so near a glimpse of their nature,

as light in the sun and elements ; we style it a bare accident, but where it subsists alone 'tis a spiritual substance, and may be an angel ; in brief, conceive light invisible, and that is a spirit.

XXXIV. These are certainly the magisterial and masterpieces of the Creator, the flower or (as we may say) the best part of nothing, actually existing what we are but in hopes and probability ; we are only that amphibious piece between a corporal and spiritual essence, that middle form that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature that jumps not from extremes, but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God, it is indisputable, and upon record of Holy Scripture ; but to call ourselves a microcosm, or little world, I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetorick, till my near judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein ; for first we are a rude mass, and in the rank of creatures which only are, and have a dull kind of being not privileged with life, or preferred to sense or reason ; next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits, running on in one mysterious nature those five kinds of existences, which comprehend the creatures not only of the world, but of the universe. Thus is man that great and true amphibium, whose nature is disposed to live not only like other creatures in divers elements, but in divided and distinguished worlds ; for though there be but one to sense there are two to reason ; the one visible, the other invisible, whereof Moses seems to have left description, and of the other so obscurely that some parts thereof are yet in controversy. And truly for the first chapters

of Genesis, I must confess a great deal of obscurity; though divines have to the power of human reason endeavoured to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.

XXXV. Now for that immaterial world, methinks we need not wander so far as the first moveable; for even in this material fabrick the spirits walk as freely exempt from the affection of time, place, and motion, as beyond the extremest circumference: do but extract from the corpulency of bodies, or resolve things beyond their first matter, and you discover the habitation of angels, which if I call the ubiquitary and omnipresent essence of God, I hope I shall not offend divinity; for before the creation of the world God was really all things. For the angels he created no new world, or determinate mansion, and therefore they are every where where is his essence, and do live at a distance even in himself: that God made all things for man, is in some sense true, yet not so far as to subordinate the creation of those purer creatures unto ours, though as ministring spirits they do, and are willing to fulfil the will of God in these lower and sublunary affairs of man. God made all things for himself, and it is impossible he should make them for any other end than his own glory; it is all he can receive, and all that is without himself; for honour being an external adjunct, and in the honourer rather than in the person honoured, it was necessary to make a creature from whom he might receive this homage, and that is in the other world angels, in this, man; which when we neglect, we forget the very end of our creation, and may justly provoke

God not only to repent that he hath made the world, but that he hath sworn he would not destroy it. That there is but one world, is a conclusion of faith. Aristotle with all his philosophy hath not been able to prove it, and as weakly that the world was eternal; that dispute much troubled the pen of the ancient philosophers, but Moses decided that question, and all is salved with the new term of a creation, that is, a production of something out of nothing; and what is that? Whatsoever is opposite to something; or more exactly, that which is truly contrary unto God; for he only is, all others have an existence with dependency, and are something but by a distinction: and herein is divinity conformant unto philosophy, and generation not only founded on contrarieties, but also creation; God being all things, is contrary unto nothing, out of which were made all things, and so nothing became something, and omneity informed nullity into an essence.

XXXVI. The whole creation is a mystery, and particularly that of man; at the blast of his mouth were the rest of the creatures made, and at his bare word they started out of nothing; but in the frame of man (as the text describes it) he played the sensible operator, and seemed not so much to create, as make him; when he had separated the materials of other creatures there consequently resulted a form and soul; but having raised the walls of man, he was driven to a second and harder creation of a substance like himself, an incorruptible and immortal soul. For these two affections we have the philosophy and opinion of the heathens; the flat affirmative of Plato, and not a negative from Aristotle. There is another scruple cast in by divinity (concerning its production) much disputed

in the German auditries, and with that indifferency and equality of argument as leave the controversy undetermined. I am not of Paracelsus' mind, that boldly delivers a receipt to make a man without conjunction; yet cannot but wonder at the multitude of heads that do deny traduction, having no other argument to confirm their belief than that rhetorical sentence and anti-metathesis of Augustine, *creando infunditur, infundendo creatur*: either opinion will consist well enough with religion; yet I should rather incline to this, did not one objection haunt me, not wrung from speculations and subtleties but from common sense, and observation; not pickt from the leaves of any author, but bred amongst the weeds and tares of mine own brain. And this is a conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions in the copulation of a man with a beast; for if the soul of man be not transmitted and transfused in the seed of the parents, why are not those productions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture of reason in as high a measure as it can evidence itself in those improper organs? Nor truly can I peremptorily deny that the soul, in this her sublunary estate, is wholly and in all acceptions inorganical, but that for the performance of her ordinary actions is required not only a symmetry and proper disposition of organs, but a crasis and temper correspondent to its operations: yet is not this mass of flesh and visible structure the instrument and proper corps of the soul, but rather of sense, and that the hand of reason. In our study of anatomy there is a mass of mysterious philosophy, and such as reduced the very heathens to divinity: yet amongst all those rare discoveries and curious pieces I find in the fabrick of man, I do not so much content

myself as in that I find not, that is, no organ or instrument for the rational soul; for in the brain, which we term the seat of reason, there is not any thing of moment more than I can discover in the crany of a beast; and this is a sensible and no inconsiderable argument of the inorganity of the soul, at least in that sense we usually so receive it. Thus we are men, and we know not how; there is something in us that can be without us, and will be after us, though it is strange that it hath no history what it was before us, nor cannot tell how it entered in us.

XXXVII. Now for these walls of flesh, wherein the soul doth seem to be immured before the resurrection, it is nothing but an elemental composition, and a fabric that must fall to ashes. All flesh is grass, is not only metaphorically but literally true; for all those creatures we behold are but the herbs of the field, digested into flesh in them, or more remotely carnified in ourselves. Nay further, we are all what we abhor, anthropophagi and cannibals, devourers not only of men, but of ourselves; and that not in an allegory, but a positive truth; for all this mass of flesh which we behold, came in at our mouths; this frame we look upon, hath been upon our trenchers; in brief, we have devoured ourselves. I cannot believe the wisdom of Pythagoras did ever positively, and in a literal sense, affirm his metempsuchosis, or impossible transmigration of the souls of men into beasts: of all metamorphoses or transmigrations I believe only one, that is of Lot's wife, for that of Nebuchodonosor proceeded not so far; in all other I conceive there is no further verity than is contained in their implicit sense and morality. I believe that the whole frame of a beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after

death as before it was materialled unto life ; that the souls of men know neither contrary nor corruption ; that they subsist beyond the body, and outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures, and without a miracle ; that the souls of the faithful, as they leave earth, take possession of heaven ; that those apparitions and ghosts of departed persons are not the wandering souls of men, but the unquiet walks of devils, prompting and suggesting us unto mischief, blood, and villany, instilling, and stealing into our hearts ; that the blessed spirits are not at rest in their graves, but wander solicitous of the affairs of the world : that those phantasms appear often and do frequent cemeteries, charnel-houses, and churches, it is because those are the dormitories of the dead, where the devil like an insolent champion beholds with pride the spoils and trophies of his victory in Adam.

XXXVIII. This is that dismal conquest we all deplore, that makes us so often cry (O) *Adam quid fecisti!* I thank God I have not those strait ligaments, or narrow obligations to the world, as to dote on life or be convulst and tremble at the name of death ; not that I am insensible of the dread and horrour thereof, or by raking into the bowels of the deceased, continual sight of anatomies, skeletons, or cadaverous reliques, like vespilloes, or grave-makers, I am become stupid, or have forgot the apprehension of mortality ; but that marshalling all the horrours, and contemplating the extremities thereof, I find not any thing therein able to daunt the courage of a man, much less a well-resolved Christian. And therefore am not angry at the errour of our first parents, or unwilling to bear a part of this common fate, and like the best of them to die, that is, to cease to breathe, to take a farewell of the elements, to be a kind

of nothing for a moment, to be within one instant of a spirit. When I take a full view and circle of myself, without this reasonable moderator and equal piece of justice, death, I do conceive myself the miserablest person extant; were there not another life that I hope for, all the vanities of this world should not intreat a moment's breath from me; could the devil work my belief to imagine I could never die, I would not outlive that very thought; I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I cannot think this is to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity: in expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life, yet in my best meditations do often defy death; I honour any man that contemns it, nor can I highly love any that is afraid of it; this makes me naturally love a soldier, and honour those tattered and contemptible regiments that will die at the command of a sergeant. For a pagan there may be some motives to be in love with life; but for a Christian to be amazed at death, I see not how he can escape this dilemma, that he is too sensible of this life, or hopeless of the life to come.

XXXIX. Some divines count Adam thirty years old at his creation, because they suppose him created in the perfect age and stature of man. And surely we are all out of the computation of our age, and every man is some months elder than he bethinks him; for we live, move, have a being, and are subject to the actions of the elements and the malice of diseases, in that other world, the truest microcosm, the womb of our mother. For besides that general and common existence we are conceived to hold in our chaos, and whilst we sleep within the bosom of our causes, we enjoy a being and

life in three distinct worlds, wherein we receive most manifest graduations. In that obscure world and womb of our mother, our time is short, computed by the moon; yet longer than the days of many creatures that behold the sun, ourselves being not yet without life, sense, and reason; though for the manifestation of its actions, it awaits the opportunity of objects, and seems to live there but in its root and soul of vegetation; entering afterwards upon the scene of the world, we arise up and become another creature, performing the reasonable actions of man, and obscurely manifesting that part of divinity in us, but not in complement and perfection till we have once more cast our secondine, that is, this slough of flesh, and are delivered into the last world, that is, that ineffable place of Paul, that proper *ubi* of spirits. The smattering I have of the philosophers' stone (which is something more than the perfect exaltation of gold) hath taught me a great deal of divinity, and instructed my belief, how that immortal spirit and incorruptible substance of my soul may lie obscure, and sleep a while within this house of flesh. Those strange and mystical transmigrations that I have observed in silkworms, turned my philosophy into divinity. There is in these works of nature, which seem to puzzle reason, something divine, and hath more in it than the eye of a common spectator doth discover.

XL. I am naturally bashful, nor hath conversation, age, or travel, been able to effront, or enharden me; yet I have one part of modesty which I have seldom discovered in another, that is (to speak truly) I am not so much afraid of death, as ashamed thereof; 'tis the very disgrace and ignominy of our natures, that in a moment can so disfigure us that our nearest friends,

wife, and children stand afraid and start at us. The birds and beasts of the field, that before in a natural fear obeyed us, forgetting all allegiance begin to prey upon us. This very conceit hath in a tempest disposed and left me willing to be swallowed up in the abyss of waters ; wherein I had perished unseen, unpitied, without wondering eyes, tears of pity, lectures of mortality, and none had said, *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* Not that I am ashamed of the anatomy of my parts, or can accuse nature for playing the bungler in any part of me, or my own vicious life for contracting any shameful disease upon me whereby I might not call myself as wholesome a morsel for the worms as any.

XLI. Some, upon the courage of a fruitful issue, wherein as in the truest chronicle they seem to outlive themselves, can with greater patience away with death. This conceit and counterfeit subsisting in our progenies seems to me a mere fallacy, unworthy the desires of a man that can but conceive a thought of the next world ; who, in a nobler ambition, should desire to live in his substance in heaven rather than his name and shadow in the earth. And herefore at my death I mean to take a total adieu of the world, not caring for a monument, history, or epitaph, not so much as the bare memory of my name to be found any where but in the universal register of God. I am not yet so cynical as to approve the testament of Diogenes,* nor do I altogether allow that rodomontado of Lucan,

— Cœlo tegitur, qui non habet urnam.

He that unburied lies wants not his hearse,
For unto him a tomb's the universe ;

* Who willed his friend not to bury him, but to hang him up with a staff in his hand to fright away the crows.

but commend in my calmer judgment, those ingenuous intentions that desire to sleep by the urns of their fathers, and strive to go the neatest way unto corruption. I do not envy the temper of crows and daws, nor the numerous and weary days of our fathers before the flood. If there be any truth in astrology I may outlive a jubilee; as yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn, nor hath my pulse beat thirty years, and yet excepting one, have seen the ashes and left under ground, all the kings of Europe; have been contemporary to three emperours, four grand signiours, and as many popes: methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun; I have shaked hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age, the world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantalones and anticks to my severer contemplations.

XLII. It is not, I confess, an unlawful prayer to desire to surpass the days of our Saviour, or wish to outlive that age wherein he thought fittest to die; yet if (as divinity affirms) there shall be no gray hairs in heaven, but all shall rise in the perfect state of men, we do but oulive those perfections in this world to be recalled unto them by a greater miracle in the next, and run on here but to be retrograde hereafter. Were there any hopes to outlive vice, or a point to be superannuated from sin, it were worthy our knees to implore the days of Methuselah. But age doth not rectify, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worser habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices; for every day as we grow weaker in age we grow stronger in sin, and the number of our days doth but make our sins innumerable. The same vice committed at sixteen, is

not the same, though it agree in all other circumstances, as at forty, but swells and doubles from that circumstance of our ages, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgment cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon: every sin, the oftener it is committed the more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness, for as they proceed they ever multiply, and like figures in arithmetick, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And though I think no man can live well once but he that could live twice, yet for my own part I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thread of my days; not upon Cicero's ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse. I find my growing judgment daily instruct me how to be better, but my untamed affections and confirmed vitiosity makes me daily do worse; I find in my confirmed age the same sins I discovered in my youth; I committed many then because I was a child, and because I commit them still I am yet an infant. Therefore I perceive a man may be twice a child before the days of dotage, and stand in need of Æson's bath before threescore.

XLIII. And truly there goes a great deal of providence to produce a man's life unto threescore; there is more required than an able temper for those years; though the radical humour contain in it sufficient oil for seventy, yet I perceive in some it gives no light past thirty: men assign not all the causes of long life that write whole books thereof. They that found themselves on the radical balsam, or vital sulphur of the parts, determine not why Abel lived not so long as Adam. There

is therefore a secret glome or bottom of our days ; 'twas his wisdom to determine them, but his perpetual and waking providence that fulfils and accomplisheth them ; wherein the spirits, ourselves, and all the creatures of God in a secret and disputed way do execute his will. Let them not therefore complain of immaturity that die about thirty ; they fall but like the whole world, whose solid and well-composed substance must not expect the duration and period of its constitution ; when all things are completed in it its age is accomplished, and the last and general fever may as naturally destroy it before six thousand, as me before forty ; there is therefore some other hand that twines the thread of life than that of nature : we are not only ignorant in antipathies and occult qualities ; our ends are as obscure as our beginnings ; the line of our days is drawn by night, and the various effects therein by a pencil that is invisible ; wherein though we confess our ignorance, I am sure we do not err if we say it is the hand of God.

XLIV. I am much taken with two verses of Lucan, since I have been able not only as we do at school, to construe, but understand :

Victurosque Dei celant, ut vivere durent,
Felix esse mori.

We're all deluded, vainly searching ways
To make us happy by the length of days ;
For cunningly to make 's protract this breath,
The Gods conceal the happiness of death.

There be many excellent strains in that poet, wherewith his stoical genius hath liberally supplied him ; and truly there are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno, and doctrine of the stoicks, which, I perceive, delivered in

a pulpit I pass for current divinity ; yet herein are they in extremes, that can allow a man to be his own assassin, and so highly extol the end and suicide of Cato ; this is indeed not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life. It is a brave act of valour to condemn death ; but where life is more terrible than death it is then the truest valour to dare to live ; and herein religion hath taught us a noble example : for all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scævola, or Codrus, do not parallel or match that one of Job ; and sure there is no torture to the rack of a disease, nor any poniards in death itself, like those in the way or prologue to it. *Emori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo* ; I would not die, but care not to be dead. Were I of Caesar's religion, I should be of his desires, and wish rather to go off at one blow than to be sawed in pieces by the grating torture of a disease. Men that look no further than their outsides think health an appertenance unto life, and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick ; but I that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabrick hangs, do wonder that we are not always so ; and considering the thousand doors that lead to death do thank my God that we can die but once. 'Tis not only the mischief of diseases, and the villany of poisons, that make an end of us ; we vainly accuse the fury of guns, and the new inventions of death ; it is in the power of every hand to destroy us, and we are beholding unto every one we meet he doth not kill us. There is therefore but one comfort left, that though it be in the power of the weakest arm to take away life, it is not in the strongest to deprive us of death ; God would not exempt himself from that, the misery of immortality in the flesh ; he undertook not that was in it immortal.

Certainly there is no happiness within this circle of flesh, nor is it in the opticks of these eyes to behold felicity; the first day of our jubilee is death, the devil hath therefore failed of his desires; we are happier with death than we should have been without it: there is no misery but in himself where there is no end of misery; and so indeed in his own sense, the stoick is in the right. He forgets that he can die who complains of misery; we are in the power of no calamity while death is in our own.

XLV. Now besides this literal and positive kind of death, there are others whereof divines make mention, and those I think, not merely metaphorical, as mortification, dying unto sin and the world; therefore I say, every man hath a double horoscope, one of his humanity, his birth; another of his Christianity, his baptism, and from this do I compute or calculate my nativity; not reckoning those *horæ combustæ* and odd days, or esteeming myself any thing before I was my Saviour's, and enrolled in the register of Christ: whosoever enjoys not this life, I count him but an apparition, though he wear about him the sensible affections of flesh. In these moral acceptions, the way to be immortal is to die daily; nor can I think I have the true theory of death when I contemplate a skull, or behold a skeleton with those vulgar imaginations it casts upon us; I have therefore enlarged that common *memento mori*, into a more Christian memorandum, *memento quatuor novissima*, those four inevitable points of us all, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Neither did the contemplations of the heathens rest in their graves, without a further thought of Rhadamanth or some judicial proceeding after death, though in another way, and upon suggestion of their

natural reasons. I cannot but marvel from what sibyl or oracle they stole the prophecy of the world's destruction by fire, or whence Lucan learned to say,

Communis mundo superest rogus, ossibus astra
Mixturus.—

There yet remains to th' world one common fire,
Wherein our bones with stars shall make one pyre.

I believe the world grows near its end, yet is neither old nor decayed, nor will ever perish upon the ruins of its own principles. As the work of creation was above nature, so its adversary, annihilation ; without which the world hath not its end but its mutation. Now what force should be able to consume it thus far, without the breath of God which is the truest consuming flame, my philosophy cannot inform me. Some believe there went not a minute to the world's creation, nor shall there go to its destruction ; those six days so punctually described, make not to them one moment, but rather seem to manifest the method and idea of the great work in the intellect of God, than the manner how he proceeded in its operation. I cannot dream that there should be at the last day any such judicial proceeding, or calling to the bar, as indeed the Scripture seems to imply, and the literal commentators do conceive ; for unspeakable mysteries in the Scriptures are often delivered in a vulgar and illustrative way ; and being written unto man, are delivered, not as they truly are, but as they may be understood, wherein, notwithstanding, the different interpretations according to different capacities may stand firm with our devotion, nor be any way prejudicial to each single edification.

XLVI. Now to determine the day and year of this

inevitable time, is not only convincible and statute-madness, but also manifest impiety ; how shall we interpret Elias' six thousand years, or imagine the secret communicated to a rabbi which God hath denied unto his angels ? It had been an excellent query to have posed the devil of Delphos, and must needs have forced him to some strange amphibology ; it hath not only mocked the predictions of sundry astrologers in ages past, but the prophecies of many melancholy heads in these present, who neither understanding reasonably things past or present pretend a knowledge of things to come ; heads ordained only to manifest the incredible effects of melancholy, and to fulfil old prophecies* rather than be the authors of new. In those days there shall come wars, and rumours of wars, to me seems no prophecy, but a constant truth, in all things verified since it was pronounced : there shall be signs in the moon and stars ; how comes he then like a thief in the night, when he gives an item of his coming ? That common sign drawn from the revelation of antichrist is as obscure as any ; in our common compute he hath been come these many years, but for my own part, to speak freely, I am half of opinion that antichrist is the philosophers' stone in divinity, for the discovery and invention whereof, though there be prescribed rules and probable inductions, yet hath hardly any man attained the perfect discovery thereof. That general opinion that the world grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours ; I am afraid that the souls that now depart cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the saints under the altar, *Quousque Domine ?* How long, O Lord ? and groan in the expectation of the great jubilee.

* In those days there shall come liars and false prophets.

XLVII. This is the day that must make good that great attribute of God, his justice ; that must reconcile those unanswerable doubts that torment the wisest understandings ; and reduce those seeming inequalities and respective distributions in this world, to an equality and recompensive justice in the next. This is that one day that shall include and comprehend all that went before it ; wherein, as in the last scene, all the actors must enter to complete and make up the catastrophe of this great piece. This is the day whose memory hath only power to make us honest in the dark, and to be virtuous without a witness. *Ipsa suæ pretium virtus sibi*, that virtue is her own reward is but a cold principle, and not able to maintain our variable resolutions in a constant and settled way of goodness. I have practised that honest artifice of Seneca, and in my retired and solitary imaginations, to detain me from the foulness of vice have fancied to myself the presence of my dear and worthiest friends, before whom I should lose my head rather than be vicious ; yet herein I found that there was nought but moral honesty, and this was not to be virtuous for his sake who must reward us at the last. I have tried if I could reach that great resolution of his, to be honest without a thought of heaven or hell ; and indeed I found upon a natural inclination and imbred loyalty unto virtue, that I could serve her without a livery ; yet not in that resolved and venerable way but that the frailty of my nature, upon an easy temptation, might be induced to forget her. The life therefore and spirit of all our actions, is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours ; without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian, are no blas-

phemies, but subtle verities, and atheists have been the only philosophers.

XLVIII. How shall the dead arise, is no question of my faith; to believe only possibilities, is not faith, but mere philosophy; many things are true in divinity which are neither inducible by reason, nor confirmable by sense; and many things in philosophy confirmable by sense, yet not inducible by reason. Thus it is impossible by any solid or demonstrative reasons to persuade a man to believe the conversion of the needle to the north; though this be possible, and true, and easily credible, upon a single experiment unto the sense. I believe that our estranged and divided ashes shall unite again; that our separated dust after so many pilgrimages and transformations into the parts of minerals, plants, animals, elements, shall at the voice of God return into their primitive shapes, and join again to make up their primary and predestinate forms. As at the creation there was a separation of that confused mass into its species, so at the destruction thereof there shall be a separation into its distinct individuals. As at the creation of the world, all the distinct species that we behold lay involved in one mass, till the fruitful voice of God separated this united multitude into its several species; so at the last day, when those corrupted reliques shall be scattered in the wilderness of forms, and seem to have forgot their proper habits, God by a powerful voice shall command them back into their proper shapes, and call them out by their single individuals; then shall appear the fertility of Adam, and the magick of that sperm that hath dilated into so many millions. I have often beheld as a miracle that artificial resurrection and revivification of mercury, how being mortified into a

thousand shapes, it assumes again its own, and returns into its numerical self. Let us speak naturally, and like philosophers, the forms of alterable bodies in these sensible corruptions perish not ; nor, as we imagine, wholly quit their mansions, but retire and contract themselves into their secret and unaccessible parts, where they may best protect themselves from the action of their antagonist. A plant or vegetable consumed to ashes, to a contemplative and school philosopher seems utterly destroyed, and the form to have taken his leave for ever ; but to a sensible artist the forms are not perished, but withdrawn into their incombustible part where they lie secure from the action of that devouring element. This is made good by experience, which can from the ashes of a plant revive the plant, and from its cinders recall it into its stalk and leaves again. What the art of man can do in these inferiour pieces, what blasphemy is it to affirm the finger of God cannot do in these more perfect and sensible structures ! This is that mystical philosophy from whence no true scholar becomes an atheist, but from the visible effects of nature grows up a real divine ; and beholds not in a dream, as Ezekiel, but in an ocular and visible object the types of his resurrection.

XLIX. Now the necessary mansions of our restored selves, are those two contrary and incompatible places we call heaven and hell ; to define them, or strictly to determine what and where these are, surpasseth my divinity. That elegant apostle which seemed to have a glimpse of heaven, hath left but a negative description thereof : which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor can enter into the heart of man : he was translated out of himself to behold it, but being re-

turned into himself could not express it. St. John's description by emeralds, chrysolites, and precious stones, is too weak to express the material heaven we behold. Briefly therefore, where the soul hath the full measure, and complement of happiness; where the boundless appetite of that spirit remains completely satisfied, that it can neither desire addition nor alteration, that I think is truly heaven; and this can only be in the enjoyment of that essence, whose infinite goodness is able to terminate the desires of itself, and the unsatiable wishes of ours; wherever God will thus manifest himself, there is heaven, though within the circle of this sensible world. Thus the soul of man may be in heaven any where, even within the limits of his own proper body; and when it ceaseth to live in the body it may remain in its own soul, that is, its Creator. And thus we may say that St. Paul, whether in the body or out of the body, was yet in heaven. To place it in the empyreal, or beyond the tenth sphere, is to forget the world's destruction; for when this sensible world shall be destroyed, all shall then be here as it is now there, an empyreal heaven, a *quasi* vacuity, when to ask where heaven is, is to demand where the presence of God is, or where we have the glory of that happy vision. Moses that was bred up in all the learning of the Egyptians, committed a gross absurdity in philosophy, when with these eyes of flesh he desired to see God, and petitioned his Maker, that is truth itself, to a contradiction. Those that imagine heaven and hell neighbours, and conceive a vicinity between those two extremes, upon consequence of the parable, where Dives discoursed with Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, do too grossly conceive of those glorified creatures, whose eyes shall easily out-

see the sun, and behold without a perspective the extremest distances; for if there shall be in our glorified eyes the faculty of sight and reception of objects, I could think the visible species there to be in as unlimitable a way as now the intellectual. I grant that two bodies placed beyond the tenth sphere, or in a vacuity, according to Aristotle's philosophy, could not behold each other, because there wants a body or medium to hand and transport the visible rays of the object unto the sense; but when there shall be a general defect of either medium to convey, or light to prepare and dispose that medium, and yet a perfect vision, we must suspend the rules of our philosophy, and make all good by a more absolute piece of opticks.

L. I cannot tell how to say that fire is the essence of hell; I know not what to make of purgatory, or conceive a flame that can either prey upon, or purify the substance of a soul; those flames of sulphur mentioned in the Scriptures, I take not to be understood of this present hell, but of that to come, where fire shall make up the complement of our tortures, and have a body or subject wherein to manifest its tyranny. Some who have had the honour to be textuary in divinity, are of opinion it shall be the same specifical fire with ours. This is hard to conceive, yet can I make good how even that may prey upon our bodies, and yet not consume us; for in this material world there are bodies that persist invincible in the powerfulest flames, and though by the action of fire they fall into ignition and liquation, yet will they never suffer a destruction. I would gladly know how Moses with an actual fire calcined, or burnt the golden calf unto powder; for that mystical metal of gold, whose solarie and celestial nature I

admire, exposed unto the violence of fire grows only hot and liquifies, but consumeth not: so when the consumable and volatile pieces of our bodies shall be refined into a more impregnable and fixed temper like gold, though they suffer from the action of flames they shall never perish, but lie immortal in the arms of fire. And surely if this frame must suffer only by the action of this element, there will many bodies escape, and not only heaven, but earth will not be at an end, but rather a beginning; for at present it is not earth, but a composition of fire, water, earth, and air; but at that time, spoiled of these ingredients, it shall appear in a substance more like itself, its ashes. Philosophers that opinioned the world's destruction by fire, did never dream of annihilation, which is beyond the power of sublunary causes; for the last and proper action of that element is but vitrification, or a reduction of a body into glass; and therefore some of our chymicks facetiously affirm, that at the last fire all shall be crystallized and reverberated into glass, which is the utmost action of that element. Nor need we fear this term, annihilation, or wonder that God will destroy the works of his creation; for man subsisting, who is, and will then truly appear a microcosm, the world cannot be said to be destroyed. For the eyes of God, and perhaps also of our glorified selves, shall as really behold and contemplate the world in its epitome or contracted essence, as now it doth at large and in its dilated substance. In the seed of a plant, to the eyes of God and to the understanding of man, there exists, though in an invisible way, the perfect leaves, flowers, and fruit thereof; (for things that are in *posse* to the sense, are actually existent to the understanding.) Thus God beholds all things,

who contemplates as fully his works in their epitome as in their full volume; and beheld as amply the whole world in that little compendium of the sixth day as in the scattered and dilated pieces of those five before.

LI. Men commonly set forth the torments of hell by fire, and the extremity of corporal afflictions, and describe hell in the same method that Mahomet doth heaven. This indeed makes a noise, and drums in popular ears; but if this be the terrible piece thereof it is not worthy to stand in diameter with heaven, whose happiness consists in that part that is best able to comprehend it, that immortal essence, that translated divinity and colony of God, the soul. Surely though we place hell under earth, the devil's walk and purlieu is about it; men speak too popularly who place it in those flaming mountains, which to grosser apprehensions represent hell. The heart of man is the place the devils dwell in; I feel sometimes a hell within myself, Lucifer keeps his court in my breast, Legion is revived in me. There are as many hells, as Anaxagoras concited worlds; there was more than one hell in Magdalene when there were seven devils; for every devil is an hell unto himself; he holds enough of torture in his own *ubi*, and needs not the misery of circumference to afflict him; and thus a distracted conscience here, is a shadow or introduction unto hell hereafter. Who can but pity the merciful intention of those hands that do destroy themselves? the devil were it in his power would do the like, which being impossible his miseries are endless, and he suffers most in that attribute wherein he is impassible, his immortality.

LII. I thank God, and with joy I mention it, I was never afraid of hell, nor never grew pale at the descrip-

tion of that place; I have so fixed my contemplations on heaven that I have almost forgot the idea of hell, and am afraid rather to lose the joys of the one than endure the misery of the other; to be deprived of them is a perfect hell, and needs methinks no addition to complete our afflictions; that terrible term hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof: I fear God, yet am not afraid of him; his mercies make me ashamed of my sins, before his judgments afraid thereof; these are the forced and secondary method of his wisdom, which he useth but as the last remedy, and upon provocation; a course rather to deter the wicked than incite the virtuous to his worship. I can hardly think there was ever any scared into heaven; they go the fairest way to heaven that would serve God without a hell; other mercenaries that crouch unto him in fear of hell, though they term themselves the servants, are indeed but the slaves of the Almighty.

LIII. And to be true, and speak my soul, when I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies, either in general to mankind, or in particular to myself; and whether out of the prejudice of my affection, or an inverting and partial conceit of his mercies, I know not, but those which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me who inquire farther into them than their visible effects, they both appear, and in event have ever proved the secret and dissembled favours of his affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly and without passion, the works of God; and so well to distinguish his justice from his mercy as not to miscal those noble attributes; yet it is likewise an honest piece of logick, so to dispute

and argue the proceedings of God, as to distinguish even his judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst than the best deserve ; and to say he punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus our offences being mortal, and deserving not only death, but damnation, if the goodness of God be content to traverse and pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease, what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of his judgments, rather than admire the sceptre of his mercies ! Therefore to adore, honour, and admire him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions ; and with these thoughts, he that knows them best will not deny that I adore him : that I obtain heaven, and the bliss thereof, is accidental, and not the intended work of my devotion ; it being a felicity I can neither think to deserve, nor scarce in modesty to expect. For these two ends of us all, either as rewards or punishments, are mercifully ordained and disproportionately disposed unto our actions ; the one being so far beyond our deserts, the other so infinitely below our demerits.

LIV. There is no salvation to those that believe not in Christ, that is, say some, since his nativity, and as divinity affirmeth, before also ; which makes me much apprehend the ends of those honest worthies and philosophers which died before his incarnation. It is hard to place those souls in hell whose worthy lives do teach us virtue on earth ; methinks amongst those many sub-

divisions of hell, there might have been one limbo left for these ; what a strange vision will it be to see their poetical fictions converted into verities, and their imagined and fancied furies into real devils ! how strange to them will sound the history of Adam, when they shall suffer for him they never heard of ; when they who derive their genealogy from the gods, shall know they are the unhappy issue of sinful man ! It is an insolent part of reason to controvert the works of God, or question the justice of his proceedings : could humility teach other, as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance betwixt the Creator and the creature ; or did we seriously perpend that one simile of St. Paul, shall the vessel say to the potter, why hast thou made me thus ? it would prevent these arrogant disputes of reason, nor would we argue the definitive sentence of God, either to heaven or hell. Men that live according to the right rule and law of reason, live but in their own kind, as beasts do in theirs ; who justly obey the prescript of their natures, and therefore cannot reasonably demand a reward of their actions, as only obeying the natural dictates of their reason. It will therefore, and must at last appear, that all salvation is through Christ ; which verity I fear these great examples of virtue must confirm, and make it good how the perfectest actions of earth have no title or claim unto heaven.

LV. Nor truly do I think the lives of these or of any other were ever correspondent, or in all points conformable unto their doctrines. It is evident that Aristotle transgressed the rule of his own ethicks ; the stoicks that condemn passion, and command a man to laugh in Phalaris his bull, could not endure without a groan

a fit of the stone or colick ; the scepticks that affirmed they knew nothing, even in that opinion confute themselves, and thought they knew more than all the world beside. Diogenes I hold to be the most vain-glorious man of his time, and more ambitious in refusing all honours, than Alexander in rejecting none. Vice and the devil put a fallacy upon our reasons, and provoking us too hastily to run from it, entangle and profound us deeper in it. The duke of Venice, that weds himself unto the sea by a ring of gold, I will not argue of prodigality, because it is a solemnity of good use and consequence in the state ; but the philosopher that threw his money into the sea to avoid avarice, was a notorious prodigal. There is no road or ready way to virtue, it is not an easy point of art to disentangle ourselves from this riddle, or web of sin ; to perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a *panoplia*, or complete armour ; that whilst we lie at close ward against one vice, we lie not open to the venny of another. And indeed wiser discretions that have the thread of reason to conduct them, offend without a pardon ; whereas under-heads may stumble without dishonour. There go so many circumstances to piece up one good action, that it is a lesson to be good, and we are forced to be virtuous by the book. Again, the practice of men holds not an equal pace, yea, and often runs counter to their theory ; we naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil ; the rhetorick wherewith I persuade another, cannot persuade myself ; there is a depraved appetite in us, that will with patience hear the learned instructions of reason, but yet perform no farther than agrees to its own irregular humour. In brief, we are all monsters, that is, a composition of man and beast ;

wherein we must endeavour to be as the poets fancy that wise man Chiron, that is, to have the region of man above that of beast, and sense to sit but at the feet of reason. Lastly, I do desire with God, that all, but yet affirm with men, that few shall know salvation ; that the bridge is narrow, the passage straight unto life; yet those who do confine the church of God, either to particular nations, churches, or families, have made it far narrower than our Saviour ever meant it.

LVI. The vulgarity of those judgments that wrap the church of God in Strabo's cloak, and restrain it unto Europe, seem to me as bad geographers as Alexander, who thought he had conquered all the world when he had not subdued the half of any part thereof. For we cannot deny the church of God both in Asia and Africa, if we do not forget the peregrinations of the apostles, the deaths of the martyrs, the sessions of many, and, even in our reformed judgment, lawful councils, held in those parts in the minority and nonage of ours. Nor must a few differences, more remarkable in the eyes of man than perhaps in the judgment of God, excommunicate from heaven one another ; much less those Christians who are in a manner all martyrs, maintaining their faith in the noble way of persecution, and serving God in the fire, whereas we honour him but in the sunshine. 'Tis true, we all hold there is a number of elect, and many to be saved ; yet take our opinions together, and from the confusion thereof there will be no such thing as salvation, nor shall any one be saved : for first, the church of Rome condemneth us, we likewise them ; the sub-reformists and sectaries sentence the doctrine of our church as damnable ; the atomist, or familist, reprobates all these, and all these

them again. Thus whilst the mercies of God do promise us heaven, our conceits and opinions exclude us from that place. There must be therefore more than one St. Peter ; particular churches and sects usurp the gates of heaven, and turn the key against each other ; and thus we go to heaven against each other's wills, conceits, and opinions, and with as much uncharity as ignorance do err I fear, in points not only of our own but one another's salvation.

LVII. I believe many are saved who to man seem reprobated, and many are reprobated who in the opinion and sentence of man stand elected. There will appear at the last day strange and unexpected examples, both of his justice and his mercy, and therefore to define either, is folly in man, and insolency even in the devils ; those acute and subtile spirits in all their sagacity can hardly divine who shall be saved ; which if they could prognostick, their labour were at an end, nor need they compass the earth, seeking whom they may devour. Those who upon a rigid application of the law sentence Solomon unto damnation, condemn not only him, but themselves, and the whole world ; for by the letter, and written word of God, we are without exception in the state of death ; but there is a prerogative of God, and an arbitrary pleasure above the letter of his own law, by which alone we can pretend unto salvation, and through which Solomon might be as easily saved as those who condemn him.

LVIII. The number of those who pretend unto salvation, and those infinite swarms who think to pass through the eye of this needle, have much amazed me. That name and compellation of 'little flock' doth not comfort but deject my devotion, especially when I reflect upon

mine own unworthiness, wherein according to my humble apprehensions, I am below them all. I believe there shall never be an anarchy in heaven, but as there are hierarchies amongst the angels, so shall there be degrees of priority amongst the saints. Yet is it (I protest) beyond my ambition to aspire unto the first ranks ; my desires only are, and I shall be happy therein, to be but the last man, and bring up the rear in heaven.

LIX. Again, I am confident, and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath of my salvation : I am as it were sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as Constantinople ; yet for me to take my oath thereon were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend to absolute certainty of their salvation, yet when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness, she shall meet with many doubts, and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of St. Paul, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. That which is the cause of my election, I hold to be the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and beneplacit of God, before I was, or the foundation of the world. Before Abraham was, I am, is the saying of Christ ; yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself ; for I was not only before myself, but Adam, that is, in the idea of God, and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning ; and thus was I dead before I was alive ; though my grave be England, my dying place was paradise, and Eve miscarried of me, before she conceived of Cain.

LX. Insolent zeals that do decry good works and

rely only upon faith, take not away merit; for depending upon the efficacy of their faith, they enforce the condition of God, and in a more sophistical way do seem to challenge heaven. It was decreed by God, that only those that lapt in the water like dogs should have the honour to destroy the Midianites; yet could none of those justly challenge, or imagine he deserved that honour thereupon. I do not deny but that true faith, and such as God requires, is not only a mark or token but also a means of our salvation; but where to find this, is as obscure to me as my last end. And if our Saviour could object unto his own disciples and favourites, a faith, that to the quantity of a grain of mustard-seed is able to remove mountains; surely that which we boast of is not any thing, or at the most but a remove from nothing.

This is the tenour of my belief; wherein, though there be many things singular, and to the humour of my irregular self, yet if they square not with maturer judgments I disclaim them, and do no further father them, than the learned and best judgments shall authorize them.

THE SECOND PART.

I. Now for that other virtue of charity, without which faith is a mere notion, and of no existence, I have ever endeavoured to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity ; and if I hold the true anatomy of myself, I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue. For I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things ; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humour, air, any thing ; I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers ; but being amongst them, make them my common viands ; and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a church-yard, as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander ; at the sight of a toad, or viper, I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others ; those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch ; but where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate, but

seem for to be framed and constellated unto all ; I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden ; all places, all airs make unto me one country ; I am in England every where, and under any meridian. I have been shipwreckt, yet am not enemy with the sea or winds ; I can study, play, or sleep, in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing ; my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence but the devil ; or so at least abhor any thing but that we might come to composition. If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude ; that numerous piece of monstrosity, which taken asunder seem men, and the reasonable creatures of God, but confused together, make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than hydra ; it is no breach of charity to call these fools ; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical Scripture, and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people ; there is a rabble even amongst the gentry, a sort of plebeian heads, whose fancy moves with the same wheel as these ; men in the same level with mechanicks, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies. But as in casting account, three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them ; so neither are a troop of these ignorant doradoes, of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person, whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians, there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity, whereby one man is ranked with

another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and preeminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times, and the bias of present practice wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well-ordered polities, till corruption getteth ground; ruder desires labouring after that which wiser considerations contemn; every one having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a license or faculty to do or purchase any thing.

II. This general and indifferent temper of mine, doth more nearly dispose me to this noble virtue. It is a happiness to be born and framed unto virtue, and to grow up from the seeds of nature, rather than the inoculation and forced graffs of education; yet if we are directed only by our particular natures, and regulate our inclinations by no higher rule than that of our reasons, we are but moralists; divinity will still call us heathens. Therefore this great work of charity must have other motives, ends, and impulsions: I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfil and accomplish the will and command of my God; I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but his that enjoined it; I relieve no man upon the rhetorick of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity, doth not this so much for his sake as for his own; for by compassion we make others' misery our own, and so by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. It is as erroneous a conceit to redress other men's misfortunes upon the common considerations of

merciful natures, that it may be one day our own case; for this is a sinister and politick kind of charity, whereby we seem to bespeak the pities of men in the like occasions; and truly I have observed that those professed eleemosynaries though in a crowd or multitude, do yet direct and place their petitions on a few and selected persons; there is surely a physiognomy, which those experienced and master mendicants observe, whereby they instantly discover a merciful aspect, and will single out a face wherein they spy the signatures and marks of mercy; for there are mystically in our faces certain characters which carry in them the motto of our souls, wherein he that cannot read A. B. C. may read our natures. I hold moreover that there is a phytognomy, or physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants and vegetables; and in every one of them some outward figures which hang as signs or bushes of their inward forms. The finger of God hath left an inscription upon all his works, not graphical or composed of letters, but of their several forms, constitutions, parts, and operations; which aptly joined together do make one word that doth express their natures. By these letters God calls the stars by their names, and by this alphabet Adam assigned to every creature a name peculiar to its nature. Now there are besides these characters in our faces, certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes *à la volée*, or at random, because delineated by a pencil that never works in vain; and hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand, which I could never read of, nor discover in another. Aristotle, I confess, in his acute and singular book of physiognomy, hath made no mention of chiromancy; yet I

believe the Egyptians, who were nearer addicted to those abtruse and mystical sciences, had a knowledge therein; to which those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians did after pretend, and perhaps retained a few corrupted principles, which sometimes might verify their prognosticks.

It is the common wonder of all men, how among so many millions of faces there should be none alike; now contrary, I wonder as much how there should be any. He that shall consider how many thousand several words have been carelessly and without study composed out of twenty-four letters; withal how many hundred lines there are to be drawn in the fabrick of one man, shall easily find that this variety is necessary; and it will be very hard that they shall so concur as to make one portrait like another. Let a painter carelessly limn out a million of faces, and you shall find them all different; yea let him have his copy before him, yet after all his art there will remain a sensible distinction; for the pattern or example of every thing is the perfectest in that kind, whereof we still come short though we transcend or go beyond it, because herein it is wide and agrees not in all points unto its copy. Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature, nor any way confound the works of God: for even in things alike there is diversity, and those that do seem to accord do manifestly disagree. And thus is man like God, for in the same things that we resemble him we are utterly different from him. There was never any thing so like another as in all points to concur; there will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the identity; without which, two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

III. But to return from philosophy to charity ; I hold not so narrow a conceit of this virtue as to conceive that to give alms is only to be charitable, or think a piece of liberality can comprehend the total of charity. Divinity hath wisely divided the act thereof into many branches, and hath taught us in this narrow way many paths unto goodness ; as many ways as we may do good, so many ways we may be charitable ; there are infirmities, not only of body, but of soul, and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body, than apparel the nakedness of his soul. It is an honourable object to see the reasons of other men wear our liveries, and their borrowed understandings do homage to the bounty of ours ; it is the cheapest way of beneficence, and like the natural charity of the sun illuminates another without obscuring itself. To be reserved and caitiff in this part of goodness, is the sordidest piece of covetousness, and more contemptible than the pecuniary avarice. To this (as calling myself a scholar) I am obliged by the duty of my condition ; I make not therefore my head a grave, but a treasure of knowledge ; I intend no monopoly, but a community in learning ; I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves. I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head than beget and propagate it in his ; and in the midst of all my endeavours there is but one thought that dejects me, that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be legacied among my honoured friends.

I cannot fall out or contemn a man for an error, or conceive why a difference in opinion should divide an affection ; for controversies, disputes, and argumentations, both in philosophy and in divinity, if they meet with discreet and peaceable natures, do not infringe the laws of charity : in all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose ; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started. And this is one reason why controversies are never determined ; for though they be amply proposed, they are scarce at all handled, they do so swell with unnecessary digressions, and the parenthesis on the party is often as large as the main discourse upon the subject. The foundations of religion are already established, and the principles of salvation subscribed unto by all ; there remain not many controversies worth a passion, and yet never any disputed without, not only in divinity but inferior arts. What a *βατραχομυωμαχία* and hot skirmish is betwixt S. and T. in Lucian. How do grammarians hack and slash for the genitive case in Jupiter ! how do they break their own pates to salve that of Priscian ! *Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus.* Yea even amongst wiser militants, how many wounds have been given, and credits slain, for the poor victory of an opinion or beggarly conquest of a distinction ! Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actus his razor ; their pens carry farther and give a louder report than thunder ; I had rather stand in the shock of a basilisco, than in the fury of a merciless pen. It is not mere zeal to learning, or devotion to the muses, that wiser princes patron the arts and carry an indulgent aspect unto scholars ; but a desire to have their

names eternized by the memory of their writings, and a fear of the revengeful pen of succeeding ages ; for these are the men, that when they have played their parts, and had their exits, must step out and give the moral of their scenes, and deliver unto posterity an inventory of their virtues and vices. And surely there goes a great deal of conscience to the compiling of an history ; there is no reproach to the scandal of a story ; it is such an authentick kind of falsehood that with authority belies our good names to all nations and posterity.

IV. There is another offence unto charity, which no author hath ever written of, and few take notice of ; and that's the reproach, not of whole professions, mysteries, and conditions, but of whole nations ; wherein by opprobrious epithets we miscal each other, and by an uncharitable logick, from a disposition in a few conclude a habit in all :

Le mutin Anglois, et le bravache Escossois ;
Le · · · · · Italien, et le fol Fran ois ;
Le poultron Romain, le larron de Gascongne ;
L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Aleman ivrongne.

St. Paul, that calls the Cretians liars, doth it but indirectly and upon quotation of their own poet. It is as bloody a thought in one way as Nero's was in another ; for by a word we wound a thousand, and at one blow assassine the honour of a nation. It is as complete a piece of madness to miscal and rave against the times, or think to recall men to reason by a fit of passion ; Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriack as Heraclitus that bewailed them. It moves not my spleen to behold the multitude in their proper humours, that is,

in their fits of folly and madness, as well understanding that wisdom is not profaned unto the world, and 'tis the privilege of a few to be virtuous. They that endeavour to abolish vice destroy also virtue, for contraries, though they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another. Thus virtue (abolish vice) is an idea ; again, the community of sin doth not disparage goodness ; for when vice gains upon the major part, virtue, in whom it remains becomes more excellent ; and being lost in some, multiplies its goodness in others which remain untouched, and persists intire in the general inundation. I can therefore behold vice without a satire, content only with an admonition, or instructive reprehension ; for noble natures, and such as are capable of goodness, are railed into vice, that might as easily be admonished into virtue ; and we should be all so far the orators of goodness, as to protect her from the power of vice, and maintain the cause of injured truth. No man can justly censure or condemn another, because indeed no man truly knows another. This I perceive in myself, for I am in the dark to all the world, and my nearest friends behold me but in a cloud ; those that know me but superficially, think less of me than I do of myself, those of my near acquaintance think more ; God, who truly knows me, knows that I am nothing ; for he only beholds me, and all the world, who looks not on us through a derived ray, or a trajectio[n] of a sensible species, but beholds the substance without the helps of accidents, and the forms of things as we their operations. Further, no man can judge another, because no man knows himself ; for we censure others but as they disagree from that humour which we fancy laudable in ourselves, and commend others but for that wherein they seem to quadrate and

consent with us. So that in conclusion, all is but that we all condemn, self-love. 'Tis the general complaint of these times, and perhaps of those past, that charity grows cold ; which I perceive most verified in those which most do manifest the fires and flames of zeal ; for it is a virtue that best agrees with coldest natures, and such as are complexioned for humility. But how shall we expect charity towards others when we are uncharitable to ourselves ? Charity begins at home, is the voice of the world ; yet is every man his greatest enemy, and as it were, his own executioner. *Non occides,* is the commandment of God, yet scarce observed by any man ; for I perceive every man is his own Atropos, and lends a hand to cut the thread of his own days. Cain was not therefore the first murderer, but Adam, who brought in death ; whereof he beheld the practice and example in his own son Abel, and saw that verified in the experience of another which faith could not persuade him in the theory of himself.

V. There is I think no man that apprehends his own miseries less than myself, and no man that so nearly apprehends another's. I could lose an arm without a tear, and with few groans methinks be quartered into pieces ; yet can I weep most seriously at a play, and receive with a true passion the counterfeit griefs of those known and professed impostures. It is a barbarous part of inhumanity to add unto any afflicted party's misery, or endeavour to multiply in any man, a passion whose single nature is already above his patience ; this was the greatest affliction of Job, and those oblique expostulations of his friends a deeper injury than the downright blows of the devil. It is not the tears of our own eyes only, but of our friends also, that do exhaust the current

of our sorrows, which falling into many streams, runs more peaceably, and is contented with a narrower channel. It is an act within the power of charity, to translate a passion out of one breast into another, and to divide a sorrow almost out of itself; for an affliction like a dimension may be so divided, as if not indivisible, at least to become insensible. Now with my friend I desire not to share or participate, but to engross his sorrows, that by making them mine own I may more easily discuss them; for in mine own reason, and within myself, I can command that, which I cannot intreat without myself, and within the circle of another. I have often thought those noble pairs and examples of friendship not so truly histories of what had been, as fictions of what should be; but I now perceive nothing in them but possibilities, nor any thing in the heroick examples of Damon and Pythias, Achilles and Patroclus, which methinks upon some grounds I could not perform within the narrow compass of myself. That a man should lay down his life for his friend, seems strange to vulgar affections and such as confine themselves within that worldly principle, charity begins at home. For my own part, I could never remember the relations that I held unto myself nor the respect that I owe unto my own nature, in the cause of God, my country, and my friends. Next to these three I do embrace myself: I confess I do not observe that order that the schools ordain our affections, to love our parents, wives, children, and then our friends; for excepting the injunctions of religion, I do not find in myself such a necessary and indissoluble sympathy to all those of my blood. I hope I do not break the fifth commandment if I conceive I may love my friend before the nearest of my blood, even

those to whom I owe the principles of life ; I never yet cast a true affection on a woman, but I have loved my friend as I do virtue, my soul, my God. From hence methinks I do conceive how God loves man, what happiness there is in the love of God. Omitting all other, there are three most mystical unions ; two natures in one person ; three persons in one nature ; one soul in two bodies. For though indeed they be really divided, yet are they so united as they seem but one, and make rather a duality than two distinct souls.

VI. There are wonders in true affection ; it is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles, wherein two so become one, as they both become two : I love my friend before myself, and yet methinks I do not love him enough ; some few months hence my multiplied affection will make me believe I have not loved him at all ; when I am from him I am dead till I be with him, when I am with him I am not satisfied, but would still be nearer him. United souls are not satisfied with embraces, but desire to be truly each other ; which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction. Another misery there is in affection ; that whom we truly love, like our own we forget their looks, nor can our memory retain the idea of their faces ; and it is no wonder, for they are ourselves, and our affection makes their looks our own. This noble affection falls not on vulgar and common constitutions, but on such as are markt for virtue ; he that can love his friend with this noble ardour, will in a competent degree affect all. Now if we can bring our affections to look beyond the body, and cast an eye upon the soul, we have found out the true object, not only of friendship but charity ; and the greatest happy-

ness that we can bequeath the soul, is that wherein we all do place our last felicity, salvation; which though it be not in our power to bestow, it is in our charity and pious invocations to desire, if not procure and further. I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular, without a catalogue for my friends, nor request a happiness wherein my sociable disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour. I never hear the toll of a passing-bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit; I cannot go to cure the body of my patient but I forget my profession and call unto God for his soul; I cannot see one say his prayers, but instead of imitating him I fall into a supplication for him, who perhaps is no more to me than a common nature; and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessing of mine unknown devotions. To pray for enemies, that is, for their salvation, is no harsh precept, but the practice of our daily and ordinary devotions. I cannot believe the story of the Italian; our bad wishes and uncharitable desires proceed no further than this life; it is the devil, and the uncharitable votes of hell, that desire our misery in the world to come.

VII. To do no injury, nor take none, was a principle which to my former years and impatient affections seemed to contain enough of morality; but my more settled years and Christian constitution have fallen upon severer resolutions. I can hold there is no such thing as injury; that if there be, there is no such injury as revenge, and no such revenge as the contempt of an injury; that to hate another, is to malign himself; that the truest way to love another, is to despise ourselves.

I were unjust unto mine own conscience if I should say I am at variance with any thing like myself; I find there are many pieces in this one fabrick of man; this frame is raised upon a mass of antipathies; I am one methinks but as the world; wherein notwithstanding there are a swarm of distinct essences, and in them another world of contrarieties; we carry private and domestick enemies within, publick and more hostile adversaries without. The devil that did but buffet St. Paul, plays methinks at sharp with me; let me be nothing, if within the compass of myself I do not find the battle of Lepanto, passion against reason, reason against faith, faith against the devil, and my conscience against all. There is another man within me that's angry with me, rebukes, commands, and dastards me. I have no conscience of marble to resist the hammer of more heavy offences; nor yet so soft and waxen as to take the impression of each single peccadillo or scape of infirmity; I am of a strange belief, that it is as easy to be forgiven some sins, as to commit some others. For my original sin, I hold it to be washed away in my baptism; for my actual transgressions, I compute and reckon with God, but from my last repentance, sacrament, or general absolution; and therefore am not terrified with the sins or madness of my youth. I thank the goodness of God I have no sins that want a name, I am not singular in offences, my transgressions are epidemical, and from the common breath of our corruption. For there are certain tempers of body, which matcht with an humorous depravity of mind, do hatch and produce vitiosities whose newness and monstrosity of nature admits no name; this was the temper of that lecher that carnalled with a statua, and the constitution of Nero in his

spintrian recreations. For the heavens are not only fruitful in new and unheard-of stars, the earth in plants and animals, but men's minds also in villany and vices ; now the dulness of my reason and the vulgarity of my disposition, never prompted my invention, nor solicited my affection unto any of these ; yet even those common and quotidian infirmities that so necessarily attend me, and do seem to be my very nature, have so dejected me, so broken the estimation that I should have otherwise of myself, that I repute myself the most abjectest piece of mortality. Divines prescribe a fit of sorrow to repentance ; there goes indignation, anger, sorrow, hatred, into mine ; passions of a contrary nature, which neither seem to suit with this action, nor my proper constitution. It is no breach of charity to ourselves to be at variance with our vices ; nor to abhor that part of us which is an enemy to the ground of charity, our God ; wherein we do but imitate our great selves the world, whose divided antipathies and contrary faces do yet carry a charitable regard unto the whole ; by their particular discords preserving the common harmony, and keeping in fetters those powers whose rebellions once masters might be the ruin of all.

VIII. I thank God, amongst those millions of vices I do inherit and hold from Adam, I have escaped one, and that a mortal enemy to charity ; the first and father-sin, not only of man but of the devil, pride ; a vice whose name is comprehended in a monosyllable, but in its nature not circumscribed with a word. I have escaped it in a condition that can hardly avoid it : those petty acquisitions and reputed perfections that advance and elevate the conceits of other men, add no feathers unto mine : I have seen a grammarian tower and plume

himself over a single line in Horace, and show more pride in the construction of one ode than the author in the composure of the whole book. For my own part, besides the jargon and patois of several provinces, I understand no less than six languages ; yet I protest I have no higher conceit of myself than had our fathers before the confusion of Babel, when there was but one language in the world, and none to boast himself either linguist or critick. I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their provinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies ; yet cannot all this persuade the dulness of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself, as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads that never looked a degree beyond their nests. I know the names, and somewhat more, of all the constellations in my horizon ; yet I have seen a prating mariner that could only name the pointers and the north star, out-talk me, and conceit himself a whole sphere above me. I know most of the plants of my country and of those about me ; yet methinks I do not know so many as when I did but know a hundred, and had scarcely ever simpled further than Cheapside. For indeed, heads of capacity and such as are not full with a handful or easy measure of knowledge, think they know nothing till they know all ; which being impossible, they fall upon the opinion of Socrates, and only know they know not any thing. I cannot think that Homer pined away upon the riddle of the fisherman, or that Aristotle, who understood the uncertainty of knowledge, and confessed so often the reason of man too weak for the works of nature, did ever drown himself upon the flux and reflux of Euripus. We do but learn

to day, what our better advanced judgments will unteach to morrow ; and Aristotle doth but instruct us as Plato did him, that is, to confute himself. I have run through all sorts, yet find no rest in any ; though our first studies and junior endeavours may style us peripateticks, stoicks, or academicks, yet I perceive the wisest heads prove at last almost all scepticks, and stand like Janus in the field of knowledge. I have therefore one common and authentick philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men ; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content mine own. Solomon, that complained of ignorance in the height of knowledge, hath not only humbled my conceits but discouraged my endeavours. There is yet another conceit that hath sometimes made me shut my books, which tells me it is a vanity to waste our days in the blind pursuit of knowledge, it is but attending a little longer, and we shall enjoy that by instinct and infusion which we endeavour at here by labour and inquisition. It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance, and rest contented with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation which death gives every fool gratis, and is an accessory of our glorification.

IX. I was never yet once, and commend their resolutions who never marry twice ; not that I disallow of second marriage ; as neither in all cases of polygamy, which considering some times and the unequal number of both sexes, may be also necessary. The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman ; man is the whole world, and the breath of God ; woman the rib and crooked piece of man. I could be

content that we might procreate like trees, without conjunction, or that there were any way to perpetuate the world without this trivial and vulgar way of coition ; it is the foolishest act a wise man commits in all his life, nor is there any thing that will more deject his cooled imagination, when he shall consider what an odd and unworthy piece of folly he hath committed. I speak not in prejudice, nor am averse from that sweet sex, but naturally amorous of all that is beautiful ; I can look a whole day with delight upon a handsome picture, though it be but of an horse. It is my temper, and I like it the better, to affect all harmony, and sure there is musick even in the beauty, and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of an instrument. For there is a musick wherever there is a harmony, order, or proportion ; and thus far we may maintain the musick of the spheres ; for those well-ordered motions, and regular paces, though they give no sound unto the ear, yet to the understanding they strike a note most full of harmony. Whatsoever is harmonically composed, delights in harmony ; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which declaim against all church-musick. For myself, not only from my obedience, but my particular genius, I do embrace it ; for even that vulgar and tavern musick, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in me a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the First Composer : there is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers. It is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God ; such a melody to the ear as the whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intel-

lectually sounds in the ears of God. I will not say with Plato, the soul is an harmony, but harmonical, and hath its nearest sympathy unto musick ; thus some whose temper of body agrees, and humours the constitution of their souls, are born poets, though indeed all are naturally inclined unto rhythm. This made Tacitus in the very first line of his story, fall upon a verse ;* and Cicero, the worst of poets, but declaiming for a poet, falls in the very first sentence upon a perfect hexameter.† I feel not in me those sordid and unchristian desires of my profession ; I do not secretly implore and wish for plagues, rejoice at famines, revolve ephemerides and almanacks in expectation of malignant aspects, fatal conjunctions, and eclipses : I rejoice not at unwholesome springs, nor unseasonable winters ; my prayer goes with the husbandman's ; I desire every thing in its proper season, that neither men nor the times be out of temper. Let me be sick myself, if sometimes the malady of my patient be not a disease unto me ; I desire rather to cure his infirmities than my own necessities ; where I do him no good methinks it is scarce honest gain, though I confess 'tis but the worthy salary of our well-intended endeavours. I am not only ashamed, but heartily sorry, that besides death there are diseases incurable ; yet not for my own sake, or that they be beyond my art, but for the general cause and sake of humanity, whose common cause I apprehend as mine own. And to speak more generally, those three noble professions which all civil commonwealths do honour, are raised upon the fall of Adam and are not exempt from their infirmities : there are not only diseases incurable in physick, but

* Urbem Romam in principio reges habuere.

† In qua me non inficiar medio criter esse.—*Pro Archio.*

cases indissolvable in laws, vices incorrigible in divinity. If general councils may err, I do not see why particular courts should be infallible; their perfectest rules are raised upon the erroneous reasons of man, and the laws of one, do but condemn the rules of another; as Aristotle oft-times the opinions of his predecessors, because, though agreeable to reason, yet not consonant to his own rules, and the logick of his proper principles. Again, to speak nothing of the sin against the Holy Ghost, whose cure not only but whose nature is unknown, I can cure the gout or stone in some, sooner than Divinity pride or avarice in others. I can cure vices by physick, when they remain incurable by divinity, and shall obey my pills, when they contemn their precepts. I boast nothing, but plainly say, we all labour against our own cure, for death is the cure of all diseases. There is no catholicon or universal remedy I know but this, which though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar and a pleasant potion of immortality.

X. For my conversation, it is like the sun's, with all men; and with a friendly aspect to good and bad. Methinks there is no man bad, and the worst, best; that is, while they are kept within the circle of those qualities wherein they are good: there is no man's mind of such discordant and jarring a temper to which a tunable disposition may not strike a harmony. *Magnæ virtutes, nec minora vitia*; it is the posy of the best natures, and may be inverted on the worst; there are in the most depraved and venomous dispositions, certain pieces that remain untouched, which by an antiperistasis become more excellent, or by the excellency of their antipathies are able to preserve themselves from the

contagion of their enemy vices, and persist entire beyond the general corruption. For it is also thus in natures. The greatest balsams do lie enveloped in the bodies of most powerful corrosives; I say moreover, and I ground upon experience, that poisons contain within themselves their own antidote, and that which preserves them from the venom of themselves; without which they were not deleterious to others only, but to themselves also. But it is the corruption that I fear within me, not the contagion of commerce without me. 'Tis that unruly regiment within me that will destroy me; 'tis I that do infect myself, the man without a navel yet lives in me: I feel that original canker corrode and devour me, and therefore *Defenda me Deus de me*, Lord deliver me from myself, is a part of my litany, and the first voice of my retired imaginations. There is no man alone, because every man is a microcosm, and carries the whole world about him; *nunquam minus solus quam cum solus*, though it be the apophthegm of a wise man, is yet true in the mouth of a fool; for indeed, though in a wilderness, a man is never alone, not only because he is with himself and his own thoughts, but because he is with the devil, who ever consorts with our solitude, and is that unruly rebel that musters up those disordered motions which accompany our sequestered imaginations. And to speak more narrowly, there is no such thing as solitude, nor any thing that can be said to be alone and by itself, but God, who is his own circle, and can subsist by himself; all others, besides their dissimilary and heterogeneous parts, which in a manner multiply their natures, cannot subsist without the concourse of God and the society of that hand which doth uphold their natures. In brief,

there can be nothing truly alone and by itself, which is not truly one, and such is only God; all others do transcend an unity, and so by consequence are many.

XI. Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate, were not a history but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable; for the world, I count it not an inn but an hospital, and a place, not to live but to die in. The world that I regard is myself, it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on; for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my altitude, for I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us; that mass of flesh that circumscribes me, limits not my mind; that surface that tells the heavens it hath an end, cannot persuade me I have any: I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty; though the number of the arc do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind; whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us, something that was before the elements and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me I am the image of God, as well as Scripture; he that understands not thus much, hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man. Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any; *Ruat cælum, fiat voluntas tua*, salveth all; so that whatsoever happens, it is but what our daily prayers desire. In brief, I am content, and what should Providence add

more? Surely this is it we call happiness, and this do I enjoy; with this I am happy in a dream, and as content to enjoy a happiness in a fancy as others in a more apparent truth and reality. There is surely a nearer apprehension of any thing that delights us in our dreams, than in our waked senses; without this I were unhappy, for my awaked judgment discontents me, ever whispering unto me that I am from my friend, but my friendly dreams in night requite me, and make me think I am within his arms. I thank God for my happy dreams as I do for my good rest, for there is a satisfaction in them unto reasonable desires, and such as can be content with a fit of happiness; and surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams to those of the next, as the phantasms of the night to the conceits of the day. There is an equal delusion in both, and the one doth but seem to be the emblem or picture of the other; we are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the ligation of sense, but the liberty of reason, and our awaking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps. At my nativity my ascendant was the watery sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me. I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company; yet in one dream I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof: were my memory as faithful as my reason is then fruitful, I would never study but in my dreams, and this time also would I choose for my devotions; but our

grosser memories have then so little hold of our abstracted understandings, that they forget the story, and can only relate to our awaked souls a confused and broken tale of that that hath passed. Aristotle, who hath written a singular tract of sleep, hath not methinks throughly defined it, nor yet Galen, though he seem to have corrected it; for those noctambuloes and night-walkers, though in their sleep, do yet enjoy the action of their senses: we must therefore say that there is something in us that is not in the jurisdiction of Morpheus, and that those abstracted and ecstatick souls do walk about in their own corps, as spirits with the bodies they assume; wherein they seem to hear, see, and feel, though indeed the organs are destitute of sense, and their natures of those faculties that should inform them. Thus it is observed that men sometimes upon the hour of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves; for then the soul beginning to be freed from the ligaments of the body, begins to reason like herself, and to discourse in a strain above mortality.

XII. We term sleep a death, and yet it is waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life. 'Tis indeed a part of life that best expresseth death; for every man truly lives so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself; Themistocles therefore that slew his soldier in his sleep, was a merciful executioner, 'tis a kind of punishment the mildness of no laws hath invented; I wonder the fancy of Lucan and Seneca did not discover it. It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily; a death which Adam died before his mortality; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death; in fine, so like death I dare not trust it

without my prayers, and an half adieu unto the world,
and take my farewell in a colloquy with God.

The night is come, like to the day
Depart not thou great God away !
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of thy light ;
Keep still in my horizon, for to me
The sun makes not the day, but thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep ;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close ;
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance,
Make my sleep a holy trance,
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought,
And with as active vigour run
My course, as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death, O make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die ;
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with thee :
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days, in vain
I do now wake to sleep again ;
O come that hour when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever !

This is the dormative I take to bedward, I need no other laudanum than this to make me sleep ; after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun, and sleep unto the resurrection.

XIII. The method I should use in distributive justice,

I often observe in commutative, and keep a geometrical proportion in both ; whereby becoming equable to others, I become unjust to myself, and supererogate in that common principle, do unto others as thou wouldest be done unto thyself. I was not born unto riches, neither is it I think my star to be wealthy ; or if it were, the freedom of my mind and frankness of my disposition, were able to contradict and cross my fates ; for to me avarice seems not so much a vice as a deplorable piece of madness ; to conceive ourselves urinals, or be persuaded that we are dead, is not so ridiculous, nor so many degrees beyond the power of hellebore as this. The opinions of theory and positions of men are not so void of reason as their practised conclusions ; some have held that snow is black, that the earth moves, that the soul is air, fire water ; but all this is philosophy, and there is no delirium, if we do but speculate the folly and indisputable dotage of avarice to that subterraneous idol, and god of the earth. I do confess I am an atheist, I cannot persuade myself to honour that the world adores ; whatsoever virtue its prepared substance may have within my body, it hath no influence nor operation without ; I would not entertain a base design, or an action that should call me villain, for the Indies ; and for this only do I love and honour my own soul, and have me-thinks two arms too few to embrace myself. Aristotle is too severe, that will not allow us to be truly liberal without wealth, and the bountiful hand of fortune ; if this be true, I must confess I am charitable only in my liberal intentions, and bountiful well-wishes. But if the example of the mite be not only an act of wonder, but an example of the noblest charity, surely poor men may also build hospitals, and the rich alone have not erected

cathedrals. I have a private method which others observe not ; I take the opportunity of myself to do good, I borrow occasion of charity from mine own necessities, and supply the wants of others when I am in most need myself ; for it is an honest stratagem to take advantage of ourselves, and so to husband the acts of virtue, that where they are defective in one circumstance, they may repay their want and multiply their goodness in another. I have not Peru in my desires, but a competence, and ability to perform those good works to which the Almighty hath inclined my nature. He is rich who hath enough to be charitable, and it is hard to be so poor that a noble mind may not find a way to this piece of goodness. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord ; there is more rhetorick in that one sentence than in a library of sermons ; and indeed if those sentences were understood by the reader with the same emphasis as they are delivered by the author, we needed not those volumes of instructions, but might be honest by an epitome. Upon this motive only I cannot behold a beggar without relieving his necessities with my purse, or his soul with my prayers ; these scenical and accidental differences between us cannot make me forget that common and untouched part of us both ; there is under these centoes and miserable outsides, these mutilate and semi-bodies, a soul of the same alloy with our own, whose genealogy is God as well as ours, and in as fair a way to salvation as ourselves. Statists that labour to contrive a commonwealth without poverty, take away the object of charity, not understanding only the commonwealth of a Christian, but forgetting the prophecy of Christ.

XIV. Now there is another part of charity, which is

the basis and pillar of this, and that is the love of God, for whom we love our neighbour; for this I think charity, to love God for himself, and our neighbour for God. All that is truly amiable is God, or as it were a divided piece of him, that retains a reflex or shadow of himself. Nor is it strange that we should place affection on that which is invisible; all that we truly love is thus; what we adore under affection of our senses deserves not the honour of so pure a title. Thus we adore virtue, though to the eyes of sense she is invisible; thus that part of our noble friends that we love, is not that part that we embrace, but that insensible part that our arms cannot embrace. God being all goodness, can love nothing but himself; he loves us but for that part which is as it were himself, and the traduction of his Holy Spirit. Let us call to assize the loves of our parents, the affection of our wives and children, and they are all dumb shows and dreams, without reality, truth, or constancy: for first, there is a strong bond of affection between us and our parents; yet how easily dissolved! We betake ourselves to a woman, forget our mother in a wife, and the womb that bare us in that that shall bear our image. This woman blessing us with children, our affection leaves the level it held before, and sinks from our bed unto our issue and picture of posterity, where affection holds no steady mansion. They, growing up in years, desire our ends, or applying themselves to a woman, take a lawful way to love another better than ourselves. Thus I perceive a man may be buried alive, and behold his grave in his own issue.

XV. I conclude therefore and say, there is no happiness under (or as Copernicus will have it, above) the sun, nor any crambe in that repeated verity and burthen

of all the wisdom of Solomon, all is vanity and vexation of spirit; there is no felicity in that the world adores. Aristotle whilst he labours to refute the ideas of Plato, falls upon one himself; for his *summum bonum* is a chimera, and there is no such thing as his felicity. That wherein God himself is happy, the holy angels are happy, in whose defect the devils are unhappy, that dare I call happiness; whatsoever conduceth unto this, may with an easy metaphor deserve that name; whatsoever else the world terms happiness, is to me a story out of Pliny, an apparition or neat delusion, wherein there is no more of happiness than the name. Bless me in this life with but the peace of my conscience, command of my affections, the love of thyself and my dearest friends, and I shall be happy enough to pity Cæsar. These are O Lord the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth; wherein I set no rule or limit to thy hand or providence; dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing.

F I N I S.

Christian Morals.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
DAVID EARL OF BUCHAN,

VISCOUNT AUCHTERHOUSE, LORD CARDROSS
AND GLENOVACHIE, ONE OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE, AND LORD
LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTIES OF STIRLING AND CLACKMANNAN
IN NORTH BRITAIN.

My Lord,

The honour you have done our family obligeth us to make all just acknowledgments of it; and there is no form of acknowledgment in our power, more worthy of your lordship's acceptance, than this dedication of the last work of our honoured and learned Father. Encouraged hereunto by the knowledge we have of your lordship's judicious relish of universal learning, and sublime virtue, we beg the favour of your acceptance of it, which will very much oblige our family in general, and her in particular who is,

My Lord,
Your lordship's most humble servant,
ELIZABETH LITTLETON.

THE PREFACE.

If any one, after he has read *RELIGIO MEDICI* and the ensuing discourse, can make doubt whether the same person was the author of them both, he may be assured by the testimony of Mrs. Littleton, Sir Thomas Browne's daughter, who lived with her father when it was composed by him; and who, at the time, read it written by his own hand: and also by the testimony of others (of whom I am one), who read the manuscript of the author immediately after his death, and who have since read the same; from which it hath been faithfully and exactly transcribed for the press. The reason why it was not printed sooner is, because it was unhappily lost, by being mislaid among other manuscripts for which search was lately made in the presence of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, of which his Grace by letter informed Mrs. Littleton when he sent the manuscript to her. There is nothing printed in the discourse, or in the short notes, but what is found in the original manuscript of the author, except only where an oversight had made the addition or transposition of some words necessary.

JOHN JEFFERY,
Archdeacon of Norwich.

CHRISTIAN MORALES.

I. TREAD softly and circumspectly in this funambulatory track and narrow path of goodness ; pursue virtue virtuously ; leaven not good actions, nor render virtues disputable. Stain not fair acts with foul intentions ; maim not uprightness by halting concomitances, nor circumstantially deprave substantial goodness.

Consider whereabout thou art in Cebes's table, or that old philosophical pinax of the life of man ; whether thou art yet in the road of uncertainties ; whether thou hast yet entered the narrow gate, got up the hill and asperous way, which leadeth unto the house of sanity ; or taken that purifying potion from the hand of sincere erudition, which may send thee clear and pure away unto a virtuous and happy life.

In this virtuous voyage of thy life hull not about like the ark without the use of rudder, mast, or sail, and bound for no port. Let not disappointment cause despondency, nor difficulty despair. Think not that you are sailing from Lima to Manillia, when you may fasten up the rudder, and sleep before the wind ; but expect rough seas, flaws, and contrary blasts, and 'tis well if by many cross tacks and veerings you arrive at the port ;

for we sleep in lions' skins in our progress unto virtue, and we slide not, but climb unto it.

Sit not down in the popular forms and common level of virtues. Offer not only peace-offerings but holocausts unto God: where all is due make no reserve, and cut not a cummin-seed with the Almighty; to serve him singly to serve ourselves were too partial a piece of piety, not like to place us in the illustrious mansions of glory.

II. Rest not in an ovation* but a triumph over thy passions. Let anger walk hanging down the head; let malice go manacled, and envy fettered after thee. Behold within thee the long train of thy trophies, not without thee. Make the quarrelling Lapithytes sleep, and Centaurs within lie quiet. Chain up the unruly legion of thy breast. Lead thine own captivity captive, and be Cæsar within thyself.

III. He that is chaste and continent, not to impair his strength, or honest for fear of contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous. Adjourn not this virtue until that temper when Cato could lend out his wife, and impotent satyrs write satires upon lust; but be chaste in thy flaming days, when Alexander dared not trust his eyes upon the fair sisters of Darius, and when so many think there is no other way but Origen's.

IV. Show thy art in honesty, and lose not thy virtue by the bad managery of it. Be temperate and sober, not to preserve your body in an ability for wanton ends, not to avoid the infamy of common transgressors that way, and thereby to hope to expiate or palliate obscure or closer vices, not to spare your purse, nor

* Ovation, a petty and minor kind of triumph.

simply to enjoy health; but in one word that thereby you may truly serve God, which every sickness will tell you you cannot well do without health. The sick man's sacrifice is but a lame oblation. Pious treasures laid up in healthful days plead for sick non-performances; without which we must needs look back with anxiety upon the lost opportunities of health, and may have cause rather to envy than pity the ends of penitent publick sufferers, who go with healthful prayers unto the last scene of their lives, and in the integrity of their faculties return their spirit unto God that gave it.

V. Be charitable before wealth make thee covetous, and lose not the glory of the mite. If riches increase, let thy mind hold pace with them, and think it not enough to be liberal, but munificent. Though a cup of cold water from some hand may not be without its reward, yet stick not thou for wine and oil for the wounds of the distressed, and treat the poor as our Saviour did the multitude, to the reliques of some baskets. Diffuse thy beneficence early, and while thy treasures call thee master: there may be an Atropos of thy fortunes before that of thy life, and thy wealth cut off before that hour, when all men shall be poor; for the justice of death looks equally upon the dead, and Charon expects no more from Alexander than from Irus.

VI. Give not only unto seven, but also unto eight,* that is unto more than many. Though to give unto every one that asketh† may seem severe advice, yet give thou also before asking; that is, where want is silently clamorous, and men's necessities, not their

* Ecclesiasticus xi. 2.

† Luke vi. 30.

tongues, do loudly call for thy mercies. For though sometimes necessitousness be dumb, or misery speak not out, yet true charity is sagacious, and will find out hints for beneficence. Acquaint thyself with the physiognomy of want, and let the dead colours and first lines of necessity suffice to tell thee there is an object for thy bounty. Spare not where thou canst not easily be prodigal, and fear not to be undone by mercy. For since he who hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Almighty rewarder, who observes no ides but every day for his payments, charity becomes pious usury, Christian liberality the most thriving industry, and what we adventure in a cockboat may return in a carrack unto us. He who thus casts his bread upon the water shall surely find it again; for though it falleth to the bottom, it sinks but like the axe of the prophet, to rise again unto him.

VII. If avarice be thy vice, yet make it not thy punishment. Miserable men commiserate not themselves, bowelless unto others, and merciless unto their own bowels. Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and think it more satisfaction to live richly than die rich. For since thy good works, not thy goods, will follow thee; since wealth is an appertenance of life, and no dead man is rich; to famish in plenty, and live poorly to die rich, were a multiplying improvement in madness, and use upon use in folly.

VIII. Trust not to the omnipotency of gold, and say not unto it thou art my confidence. Kiss not thy hand to that terrestrial sun, nor bore thy ear unto its servitude. A slave unto mammon makes no servant unto God. Covetousness cracks the sinews of faith; numbs the apprehension of any thing above sense, and only

affected with the certainty of things present, makes a peradventure of things to come; lives but unto one world, nor hopes but fears another; makes their own death sweet unto others, bitter unto themselves; brings formal sadness, scenical mourning, and no wet eyes at the grave.

IX. Persons lightly dipt, not grained in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness, and faint-hued in integrity. But be thou what thou virtuously art, and let not the ocean wash away thy tincture. Stand magnetically upon that axis, when prudent simplicity hath fixt there; and let no attraction invert the poles of thy honesty. That vice may be uneasy and even monstrous unto thee, let iterated good acts and long confirmed habits make virtue almost natural, or a second nature in thee. Since virtuous superstructions have commonly generous foundations, dive into thy inclinations, and early discover what nature bids thee to be, or tells thee thou mayest be. They who thus timely descend into themselves, and cultivate the good seeds which nature hath set in them, prove not shrubs but cedars in their generation. And to be in the form of the best of the bad, or the worst of the good,* will be no satisfaction unto them.

X. Make not the consequence of virtue the ends thereof. Be not beneficent for a name or cymbal of applause, nor exact and just in commerce for the advantages of trust and credit, which attend the reputation of true and punctual dealing. For these rewards, though unsought for, plain virtue will bring with her. To have other by-ends in good actions sours laudable

* Optimi malorum pessimii bonorum.

performances, which must have deeper roots, motives, and instigations, to give them the stamp of virtues.

XI. Let not the law of thy country be the *non ultra* of thy honesty; nor think that always good enough which the law will make good. Narrow not the law of charity, equity, mercy. Join gospel righteousness with legal right. Be not a mere Gamaliel in the faith, but let the sermon in the mount be thy targum unto the law of Sinai.

XII. Live by old ethicks and the classical rules of honesty. Put no new names or notions upon authentick virtues and vices. Think not that morality is ambulatory; that vices in one age are not vices in another; or that virtues, which are under the everlasting seal of right reason, may be stamped by opinion. And therefore though vicious times invert the opinions of things, and set up new ethicks against virtue, yet hold thou unto old morality; and rather than follow a multitude to do evil, stand like Pompey's pillar conspicuous by thyself, and single in integrity. And since the worst of times afford imitable examples of virtue; since no deluge of vice is like to be so general but more than eight will escape; eye well those heroes who have held their heads above water, who have touched pitch and not been defiled, and in the common contagion have remained uncorrupted.

XIII. Let age not envy draw wrinkles on thy cheeks, be content to be envied, but envy not. Emulation may be plausible and indignation allowable, but admit no treaty with that passion which no circumstance can make good. A displacency at the good of others because they enjoy it, though not unworthy of it, is an absurd depravity, sticking fast unto corrupted nature,

and often too hard for humility and charity, the great suppressors of envy. This surely is a lion not to be strangled but by Hercules himself, or the highest stress of our minds, and an atom of that power which subdueth all things unto itself.

XIV. Owe not thy humility unto humiliation from adversity, but look humbly down in that state when others look upwards upon thee. Think not thy own shadow longer than that of others, nor delight to take the altitude of thyself. Be patient in the age of pride, when men live by short intervals of reason under the dominion of humour and passion, when it's in the power of every one to transform thee out of thyself, and run thee into the short madness. If you cannot imitate Job, yet come not short of Socrates, and those patient pagans who tired the tongues of their enemies, while they perceived they spit their malice at brazen walls and statues.

XV. Let not the sun in capricorn* go down upon thy wrath, but write thy wrongs in ashes. Draw the curtain of night upon injuries, shut them up in the tower of oblivion,† and let them be as though they had not been. To forgive our enemies, yet hope that God will punish them, is not to forgive enough. To forgive them ourselves, and not to pray God to forgive them, is a partial piece of charity. Forgive thine enemies totally, and without any reserve, that however, God will revenge thee.

* Even when the days are shortest.

† Alluding unto the tower of oblivion mentioned by Procopius, which was the name of a tower of imprisonment among the Persians: whoever was put therein was as it were buried alive, and it was death for any but to name him.

XVI. While thou so hotly disclaimest the devil, be not guilty of diabolism. Fall not into one name with that unclean spirit, nor act his nature whom thou so much abhorrest; that is, to accuse, calumniate, backbite, whisper, detract, or sinistrously interpret others. Degenerous depravities, and narrow-minded vices! not only below St. Paul's noble Christian but Aristotle's true gentleman.* Trust not with some that the epistle of St. James is apocryphal, and so read with less fear that stabbing truth, that in company with this vice thy religion is in vain. Moses broke the tables, without breaking of the law; but where charity is broke, the law itself is shattered, which cannot be whole without love, which is the fulfilling of it. Look humbly upon thy virtues; and though thou art rich in some, yet think thyself poor and naked without that crowning grace, which thinketh no evil, which envieth not, which beareth, hopeth, believeth, endureth all things. With these sure graces, while busy tongues are crying out for a drop of cold water, mutes may be in happiness, and sing the Trisagion† in heaven.

XVII. However thy understanding may waver in the theories of true and false, yet fasten the rudder of thy will, steer straight unto good and fall not foul on evil. Imagination is apt to rove, and conjecture to keep no bounds. Some have run out so far, as to fancy the stars might be but the light of the crystalline heaven shot through perforations on the bodies of the orbs. Others more ingeniously doubt whether there hath not been a vast tract of land in the Atlantick ocean, which earthquakes and violent causes have long ago devoured.

* See Aristotle's Ethics, chapter of Magnanimity.

† Holy, holy, holy.

Speculative misapprehensions may be innocuous, but immorality pernicious ; theoretical mistakes and physical deviations may condemn our judgments, not lead us into judgment. But perversity of will, immoral and sinful enormities walk with Adraste and Nemesis at their backs, pursue us unto judgment, and leave us viciously miserable.

XVIII. Bid early defiance unto those vices which are of thine inward family, and having a root in thy temper plead a right and propriety in thee. Raise timely batteries against those strong holds built upon the rock of nature, and make this a great part of the militia of thy life. Delude not thyself into iniquities from participation or community, which abate the sense but not the obliquity of them. To conceive sins less, or less of sins, because others also transgress, were morally to commit that natural fallacy of man, to take comfort from society, and think adversities less because others also suffer them. The politick nature of vice must be opposed by policy ; and therefore wiser honesties project and plot against it. Wherein notwithstanding we are not to rest in generals, or the trite stratagems of art. That may succeed with one which may prove successless with another. There is no community or commonweal of virtue ; every man must study his own economy, and adapt such rules unto the figure of himself.

XIX. Be substantially great in thyself, and more than thou appearest unto others ; and let the world be deceived in thee, as they are in the lights of heaven. Hang early plummets upon the heels of pride, and let ambition have but an epicycle and narrow circuit in thee. Measure not thyself by thy morning shadow, but

by the extent of thy grave, and reckon thyself above the earth by the line thou must be contented with under it. Spread not into boundless expansions either of designs or desires. Think not that mankind liveth but for a few, and that the rest are born but to serve those ambitions which make but flies of men, and wildernesses of whole nations. Swell not into vehement actions which embroil and confound the earth ; but be one of those violent ones which force the kingdom of heaven.* If thou must needs rule, be Zeno's king, and enjoy that empire which every man gives himself. He who is thus his own monarch contentedly sways the sceptre of himself, not envying the glory of crowned heads and Elohims of the earth. Could the world unite in the practice of that despised train of virtues which the divine ethicks of our Saviour hath so inculcated unto us, the furious face of things must disappear ; Eden would be yet to be found, and the angels might look down, not with pity, but joy upon us.

XX. Though the quickness of thine ear were able to reach the noise of the moon, which some think it maketh in its rapid revolution ; though the number of thy ears should equal Argus his eyes ; yet stop them all with the wise man's wax, and be deaf unto the suggestions of tale-bearers, calumniators, pickthank or malevolent delators, who, while quiet men sleep, sowing the tares of discord and division distract the tranquillity of charity and all friendly society. These are the tongues that set the world on fire, cankers of reputation, and, like that of Jonas his gourd, wither a good name in a night. Evil spirits may sit still, while these spirits walk

* Matthew xi.

about and perform the business of hell. To speak more strictly, our corrupted hearts are the factories of the devil, which may be at work without his presence. For when that circumventing spirit hath drawn malice, envy, and all unrighteousness, unto well-rooted habits in his disciples, iniquity then goes on upon its own legs, and if the gate of hell were shut up for a time, vice would still be fertile and produce the fruits of hell. Thus when God forsakes us, Satan also leaves us; for such offenders he looks upon as sure and sealed up, and his temptations then needless unto them.

XXI. Annihilate not the mercies of God by the oblivion of ingratitude. For oblivion is a kind of annihilation, and for things to be as though they had not been, is like unto never being. Make not thy head a grave, but a repository of God's mercies. Though thou hadst the memory of Seneca, or Simonides, and conscience, the punctual memorist within us, yet trust not to thy remembrance in things which need phylacteries. Register not only strange, but merciful occurrences; let ephemerides not olympiads give thee account of his mercies. Let thy diaries stand thick with dutiful mementoes and asterisks of acknowledgment. And to be complete and forget nothing, date not his mercy from thy nativity; look beyond the world, and before the era of Adam.

XXII. Paint not the sepulchre of thyself, and strive not to beautify thy corruption. Be not an advocate for thy vices, nor call for many hour-glasses to justify thy imperfections. Think not that always good which thou thinkest thou canst always make good, nor that concealed which the sun doth not behold. That which the sun doth not now see, will be visible when the sun is out, and the stars are fallen from heaven. Meanwhile there is no dark-

ness unto conscience, which can see without light, and in the deepest obscurity give a clear draught of things which the cloud of dissimulation hath concealed from all eyes. There is a natural standing court within us, examining, acquitting, and condemning at the tribunal of ourselves, wherein iniquities have their natural thetas, and no nocent is absolved by the verdict of himself. And therefore although our transgressions shall be tried at the last bar, the process need not be long; for the Judge of all knoweth all, and every man will nakedly know himself. And when so few are like to plead not guilty, the assize must soon have an end.

XXIII. Comply with some humours, bear with others, but serve none. Civil complacency consists with decent honesty; flattery is a juggler, and no kin unto sincerity. But while thou maintainest the plain path, and scornest to flatter others, fall not into self-adulation, and become not thine own parasite. Be deaf unto thyself, and be not betrayed at home. Self-credulity, pride, and levity lead unto self-idolatry. There is no Damocles like unto self-opinion, nor any Siren to our own fawning conceptions. To magnify our minor things, or hug ourselves in our apparitions; to afford a credulous ear unto the clawing suggestions of fancy; to pass our days in painted mistakes of ourselves; and though we behold our own blood, to think ourselves the sons of Jupiter,* are blandishments of self-love worse than outward delusion. By this imposture wise men sometimes are mistaken in their elevation, and look above themselves. And fools, which are antipodes unto the wise, conceive themselves to be but their perioeci, and in the same parallel with them.

* As Alexander the Great did.

XXIV. Be not a Hercules furens abroad, and a poltron within thyself. To chase our enemies out of the field, and be led captive by our vices ; to beat down our foes, and fall down to our concupiscences ; are solecisms in moral schools, and no laurel attends them. To well manage our affections, and wild horses of Plato, are the highest Circenses ; and the noblest digladiation is in the theatre of ourselves ; for therein our inward antagonists, not only like common gladiators, with ordinary weapons and downright blows make at us, but also like retiary and laqueary combatants, with nets, frauds, and entanglements, fall upon us. Weapons for such combats are not to be forged at Lipara ; Vulcan's art doth nothing in this internal militia ; wherein not the armour of Achilles, but the armature of St. Paul, gives the glorious day, and triumphs not leading up into capitols, but up into the highest heavens. And therefore while so many think it the only valour to command and master others, study thou the dominion of thyself, and quiet thine own commotions. Let right reason be thy Lycurgus, and lift up thy hand unto the law of it ; move by the intelligences of the superiour faculties, not by the rapt of passion, nor merely by that of temper and constitution. They who are merely carried on by the wheel of such inclinations, without the hand and guidance of sovereign reason, are but the automatous part of mankind, rather lived than living, or at least under-living themselves.

XXV. Let not fortune, which hath no name in Scripture, have any in thy divinity. Let Providence, not chance, have the honour of thy acknowledgments, and be thy OEdipus in contingencies. Mark well the paths and winding ways thereof; but be not too wise in

the construction, or sudden in the application. The hand of Providence writes often by abbreviations, hieroglyphicks, or short characters, which, like the laconism on the wall, are not to be made out but by a hint or key from that Spirit which indited them. Leave future occurrences to their uncertainties, think that which is present thy own; and since 'tis easier to foretel an eclipse, than a foul day at some distance, look for little regular below. Attend with patience the uncertainty of things, and what lieth yet unexerted in the chaos of futurity. The uncertainty and ignorance of things to come makes the world new unto us by unexpected emergencies; whereby we pass not our days in the trite road of affairs affording no novity; for the novellizing spirit of man lives by variety, and the new faces of things.

XXVI. Though a contented mind enlargeth the dimension of little things, and unto some 'tis wealth enough not to be poor, and others are well content, if they be but rich enough to be honest, and to give every man his due; yet fall not into that obsolete affectation of bravery to throw away thy money, and to reject all honours or honourable stations in this courtly and splendid world. Old generosity is superannuated, and such contempt of the world out of date. No man is now like to refuse the favour of great ones, or be content to say unto princes, stand out of my sun. And if any there be of such antiquated resolutions, they are not like to be tempted out of them by great ones; and 'tis fair if they escape the name of hypochondriacks from the genius of latter times, unto whom contempt of the world is the most contemptible opinion, and to be able, like Bias, to carry all they have about them were to be the eighth

wise man. However, the old tetrick philosophers looked always with indignation upon such a face of things, and observing the unnatural current of riches, power, and honour in the world, and withal the imperfection and demerit of persons often advanced unto them, were tempted unto angry opinions, that affairs were ordered more by stars than reason, and that things went on rather by lottery than election.

XXVII. If thy vessel be but small in the ocean of this world, if meanness of possessions be thy allotment upon earth, forgot not those virtues which the great Disposer of all bids thee to entertain from thy quality and condition, that is, submission, humility, content of mind, and industry. Content may dwell in all stations. To be low, but above contempt, may be high enough to be happy. But many of low degree may be higher than computed; and some cubits above the common commensuration ; for in all states virtue gives qualifications, and allowances, which make out defects. Rough diamonds are sometimes mistaken for pebbles, and meanness may be rich in accomplishments which riches in vain desire. If our merits be above our stations, if our intrinsekal value be greater than what we go for, or our value than our valuation, and if we stand higher in God's, than in the censor's book ; it may make some equitable balance in the inequalities of this world, and there may be no such vast chasm or gulph between disparities as common measures determine. The divine eye looks upon high and low differently from that of man. They who seem to stand upon Olympus, and high mounted unto our eyes, may be but in the valleys, and low ground unto his ; for he looks upon those as highest who nearest approach his divinity, and upon those as lowest who are farthest from it.

XXVIII. When thou lookest upon the imperfections of others, allow one eye for what is laudable in them, and the balance they have from some excellency, which may render them considerable. While we look with fear or hatred upon the teeth of the viper, we may behold his eye with love. In venomous natures something may be amiable: poisons afford antipoisons; nothing is totally, or altogether uselessly bad. Notable virtues are sometimes dashed with notorious vices, and in some vicious tempers have been found illustrious acts of virtue; which makes such observable worth in some actions of king Demetrius, Antonius, and Ahab, as are not to be found in the same kind in Aristides, Numa, or David. Constancy, generosity, clemency, and liberality, have been highly conspicuous in some persons not markt out in other concerns for example or imitation. But since goodness is exemplary in all, if others have not our virtues, let us not be wanting in theirs, nor scorning them for their vices whereof we are free, be condemned by their virtues wherein we are deficient. There is dross, alloy, and embasement, in all human tempers, and he flieth without wings, who thinks to find ophir or pure metal in any. For perfection is not, like light, centered in any one body, but like the dispersed seminalities of vegetables at the creation, scattered through the whole mass of the earth, no place producing all, and almost all some. So that 'tis well, if a perfect man can be made out of many men, and to the perfect eye of God even out of mankind. Time, which perfects some things, imperfects also others. Could we intimately apprehend the ideated man, and as he stood in the intellect of God upon the first exertion by creation, we might more narrowly comprehend our present degene-

ration, and how widely we are fallen from the pure exemplar and idea of our nature: for after this corruptive elongation from a primitive and pure creation, we are almost lost in degeneration; and Adam hath not only fallen from his Creator, but we ourselves from Adam, our Tycho and primary generator.

XXIX. Quarrel not rashly with adversities not yet understood; and overlook not the mercies often bound up in them. For we consider not sufficiently the good of evils, nor fairly compute the mercies of Providence in things afflictive at first hand. The famous Andreas Doria being invited to a feast by Aloysio Fieschi with design to kill him, just the night before fell mercifully into a fit of the gout, and so escaped that mischief. When Cato intended to kill himself, from a blow which he gave his servant who would not reach his sword unto him, his hand so swelled that he had much ado to effect his design. Hereby any one but a resolved stoick might have taken a fair hint of consideration, and that some merciful genius would have contrived his preservation. To be sagacious in such intercurrences is not superstition, but wary and pious discretion, and to condemn such hints were to be deaf unto the speaking hand of God, wherein Socrates and Cardan would hardly have been mistaken.

XXX. Break not open the gate of destruction, and make no haste or bustle unto ruin. Post not heedlessly on unto the *non ultra* of folly, or precipice of perdition. Let vicious ways have their tropicks and deflexions; and swim in the waters of sin but as in the Asphaltick lake, though smeared and defiled, not to sink to the bottom. If thou hast dipt thy foot in the brink, yet venture not over Rubicon. Run not into extremities

from whence there is no regression. In the vicious ways of the world it mercifully falleth out that we become not extempore wicked, but it taketh some time and pains to undo ourselves. We fall not from virtue, like Vulcan from heaven, in a day. Bad dispositions require some time to grow into bad habits, bad habits must undermine good, and often repeated acts make us habitually evil; so that by gradual depravations, and while we are but staggeringly evil, we are not left without parentheses of consideration, thoughtful rebukes, and merciful interventions, to recal us unto ourselves. For the wisdom of God hath methodized the course of things unto the best advantage of goodness, and thinking considerators overlook not the tract thereof.

XXXI. Since men and women have their proper virtues and vices, and even twins of different sexes have not only distinct coverings in the womb, but differing qualities and virtuous habits after; transplace not their proprieties and confound not their distinctions. Let masculine and feminine accomplishments shine in their proper orbs, and adorn their respective subjects. However unite not the vices of both sexes in one; be not monstrous in iniquity, nor hermaphroditically vicious.

XXXII. If generous honesty, valour, and plain dealing, be the cognizance of thy family, or characteristick of thy country, hold fast such inclinations suckt in with thy first breath, and which lay in the cradle with thee. Fall not into transforming degenerations, which under the old name create a new nation. Be not an alien in thine own nation; bring not Orontes into Tiber; learn the virtues not the vices of thy foreign neighbours, and

make thy imitation by discretion not contagion. Feel something of thyself in the noble acts of thy ancestors, and find in thine own genius that of thy predecessors. Rest not under the expired methods of others, shine by those of thy own. Flame not like the central fire which enlighteneth no eyes, which no man seeth, and most men think there's no such thing to be seen. Add one ray unto the common lustre; add not only to the number but the note of thy generation; and prove not a cloud but an asterisk in thy region.

XXXIII. Since thou hast an alarum in thy breast, which tells thee thou hast a living spirit in thee above two thousand times in an hour; dull not away thy days in slothful supinity and the tediousness of doing nothing. To strenuous minds there is an inquietude in overquietness, and no laboriousness in labour; and to tread a mile after the slow pace of a snail, or the heavy measures of the lazy of Brazilia, were a most tiring penance, and worse than a race of some furlongs at the Olympicks. The rapid courses of the heavenly bodies are rather imitable by our thoughts, than our corporeal motions; yet the solemn motions of our lives amount unto a greater measure than is commonly apprehended. Some few men have surrounded the globe of the earth; yet many in the set locomotions and movements of their days have measured the circuit of it, and twenty thousand miles have been exceeded by them. Move circumspectly not meticulously, and rather carefully solicitous than anxiously solicitudinous. Think not there is a lion in the way, nor walk with leaden sandals in the paths of goodness; but in all virtuous motions let prudence determine thy measures. Strive not to run like Hercules, a furlong in a breath; festination may

prove precipitation; deliberating delay may be wise cunctionation, and slowness no slothfulness.

XXXIV. Since virtuous actions have their own trumpets, and without any noise from thyself will have their resound abroad, busy not thy best member in the encomium of thyself. Praise is a debt we owe unto the virtues of others, and due unto our own from all, whom malice hath not made mutes, or envy struck dumb. Fall not however into the common prevaricating way of self-commandation and boasting, by denoting the imperfections of others. He who discommendeth others, obliquely commendeth himself. He who whispers their infirmities proclaims his own exemption from them, and consequently says, I am not as this publican, or *hic niger*, whom I talk of. Open ostentation and loud vain-glory is more tolerable than this obliquity, as but containing some froth, no ink; as but consisting of a personal piece of folly, nor complicated with uncharitableness. Superfluously we seek a precarious applause abroad; every good man hath his *plaudite* within himself, and though his tongue be silent is not without loud cymbals in his breast. Conscience will become his panegyrist, and never forget to crown and extol him unto himself.

XXXV. Bless not thyself only that thou wert born in Athens;* but among thy multiplied acknowledgments lift up one hand unto heaven that thou wert born of honest parents, that modesty, humility, patience, and veracity, lay in the same egg, and came into the world with thee. From such foundations thou may'st be happy in a virtuous precocity, and make an early and

* As Socrates did. Athens a place of learning and civility.

long walk in goodness; so may'st thou more naturally feel the contrariety of vice unto nature, and resist some by the antidote of thy temper. As charity covers, so modesty preventeth a multitude of sins; withholding from noonday vices and brazen-browed iniquities, from sinning on the house-top, and painting our follies with the rays of the sun. Where this virtue reigneth, though vice may show its head it cannot be in its glory: where shame of sin sets, look not for virtue to arise; for when modesty taketh wing Astræa goes soon after.*

XXXVI. The heroical vein of mankind runs much in the soldiery, and courageous part of the world; and in that form we oftenest find men above men. History is full of the gallantry of that tribe; and when we read their notable acts, we easily find what a difference there is between a life in Plutarch and in Laërtius. Where true fortitude dwells, loyalty, bounty, friendship, and fidelity, may be found. A man may confide in persons constituted for noble ends, who dare do and suffer, and who have a hand to burn for their country and their friend. Small and creeping things are the product of petty souls. He is like to be mistaken, who makes choice of a covetous man for a friend, or relieth upon the reed of narrow and poltron friendship. Pitiful things are only to be found in the cottages of such breasts; but bright thoughts, clear deeds, constancy, fidelity, bounty, and generous honesty, are the gems of noble minds; wherein, to derogate from none, the true heroick English gentleman hath no peer.

* Astræa goddess of justice, and consequently of all virtue.

THE SECOND PART.

I. Punish not thyself with pleasure; glut not thy sense with palative delights; nor revenge the contempt of temperance by the penalty of satiety. Were there an age of delight or any pleasure durable, who would not honour Volupia? but the race of delight is short, and pleasures have mutable faces. The pleasures of one age are not pleasures in another, and their lives fall short of our own. Even in our sensual days the strength of delight is in its seldomness or rarity, and sting in its satiety; modiocrity is its life, and immoderacy its confusion. The luxurious emperours of old inconsiderately satiated themselves with the dainties of sea and land, till, wearied through all varieties, their refections became a study unto them, and they were fain to feed by invention. Novices in true Epicurism! which by mediocrity, paucity, quick and healthful appetite, makes delights smartly acceptable; whereby Epicurus himself found Jupiter's brain* in a piece Cytheridian cheese, and the tongues of nightingales in a dish of onions. Hereby healthful and temperate poverty hath the start of nauseating luxury; unto whose clear and naked appetite every meal is a feast, and in one single dish the

* Cerebrum Jovis, for a delicious bit.

first course of Metellus;* who are cheaply hungry, and never lose their hunger, or advantage of a craving appetite, because obvious food contents it; while Nero† half famished could not feed upon a piece of bread, and lingering after his snowed water, hardly got down an ordinary cup of Calda.‡ By such circumspections of pleasure the contemned philosophers reserved unto themselves the secret of delight, which the helluos of those days lost in their exorbitances. In vain we study delight: it is at the command of every sober mind, and in every sense born with us; but nature, who teacheth us the rule of pleasure, instructeth also in the bounds thereof, and where its line expireth. And therefore temperate minds, not pressing their pleasures until the sting appeareth, enjoy their contentations contentedly and without regret, and so escape the folly of excess, to be pleased unto displacency.

II. Bring candid eyes unto the perusal of men's works, and let not Zoilism or detraction blast well-intended labours. He that endureth no faults in men's writings must only read his own, wherein for the most part all appeareth white. Quotation mistakes, inadvertency, expedition, and human lapses, may make not only moles but warts in learned authors, who notwithstanding being judged by the capital matter admit not of disparagement. I should unwillingly affirm that Cicero was but slightly versed in Homer, because in his work *de Gloria*, he ascribed those verses unto Ajax which were delivered by Hector. What if Plautus in

* Metellus his riotous pontifical supper, the great variety whereat is to be seen in *Macrobius*.

† Nero in his flight.—*Sueton.*

‡ Caldæ gelidæque minister.

the account of Hercules mistaketh nativity for conception? Who would have mean thoughts of Apollinaris Sidonius, who seems to mistake the river Tigris for Euphrates? and though a good historian and learned bishop of Auvergne had the misfortune to be out in the story of David, making mention of him when the ark was sent back by the Philistines upon a cart; which was before his time. Though I have no great opinion of Machiavel's learning, yet I shall not presently say, that he was but a novice in Roman history, because he was mistaken in placing Commodus after the emperor Severus. Capital truths are to be narrowly eyed, collateral lapses and circumstantial deliveries not to be too strictly sifted. And if the substantial subject be well forged out, we need not examine the sparks which irregularly fly from it.

III. Let well-weighed considerations, not stiff and peremptory assumptions, guide thy discourses, pen, and actions. To begin or continue our works like Trismegistus of old,* *verum certè verum atque verissimum est*, would sound arrogantly unto present ears in this strict inquiring age, wherein for the most part, probably, and perhaps, will hardly serve to mollify the spirit of captious contradicitors. If Cardan saith that a parrot is a beautiful bird, Scaliger will set his wits o'work to prove it a deformed animal. The compage of all physical truths is not so closely jointed, but opposition may find intrusion; nor always so closely maintained, as not to suffer attrition. Many positions seem quodlibetically constituted, and like a Delphian blade will cut on both sides. Some truths seem almost falsehoods, and

* In Tabula Smaragdina.

some falsehoods almost truths; wherein falsehood and truth seem almost equilibriously stated, and but a few grains of distinction to bear down the balance. Some have digged deep, yet glanced by the royal vein; and a man may come unto the pericardium, but not the heart of truth. Besides, many things are known, as some are seen, that is by parallaxis, or at some distance from their true and proper beings, the superficial regard of things having a different aspect from their true and central natures. And this moves sober pens unto suspensory and timorous assertions, nor presently to obtrude them as Sibyl's leaves, which after-considerations may find to be but folious appearances, and not the central and vital interiours of truth.

IV. Value the judicious, and let not mere acquests in minor parts of learning gain thy pre-existimation. 'Tis an unjust way of compute to magnify a weak head for some Latin abilities, and to undervalue a solid judgment, because he knows not the genealogy of Hector. When that notable king of France* would have his son to know but one sentence in Latin, had it been a good one perhaps it had been enough. Natural parts and good judgments rule the world. States are not governed by ergotisms. Many have ruled well who could not, perhaps, define a commonwealth, and they who understand not the globe of the earth command a great part of it. Where natural logick prevails not, artificial too often faileth. Where nature fills the sails, the vessel goes smoothly on, and when judgment is the pilot, the ensurance need not be high. When industry builds upon nature, we may expect pyramids; where

* Lewis the Eleventh. *Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.*

that foundation is wanting, the structure must be low. They do most by books, who could do much without them, and he that chiefly owes himself unto himself, is the substantial man.

V. Let thy studies be free as thy thoughts and contemplations, but fly not only upon the wings of imagination ; join sense unto reason, and experiment unto speculation, and so give life unto embryon truths, and verities yet in their chaos. There is nothing more acceptable unto the ingenious world, than this noble eluctation of truth ; wherein, against the tenacity of prejudice and prescription, this century now prevaleth. What libraries of new volumes after-times will behold, and in what a new world of knowledge the eyes of our posterity may be happy, a few ages may joyfully declare ; and is but a cold thought unto those, who cannot hope to behold this exantlation of truth, or that obscured virgin half out of the pit. Which might make some content with a commutation of the time of their lives, and to commend the fancy of the Pythagorean metempsychosis ; whereby they might hope to enjoy this happiness in their third or fourth selves, and behold that in Pythagoras, which they now but foresee in Euphorbus.* The world, which took but six days to make, is like to take six thousand to make out : meanwhile old truths voted down begin to resume their places, and new ones arise upon us ; wherein there is no comfort in the happiness of Tully's Elysium,† or any satisfaction from the ghosts of the ancients, who knew so little of what is

* *Ipse ego, nam memini, Trojani tempore belli
Panthoïdes Euphorbus eram.—Ovid.*

† Who comforted himself that he should there converse with the old philosophers.

now well known. Men disparage not antiquity who prudently exalt new inquiries, and make not them the judges of truth, who were but fellow inquirers of it. Who can but magnify the endeavours of Aristotle, and the noble start which learning had under him ; or less than pity the slender progression made upon such advantages ? while many centuries were lost in repetitions and transcriptions sealing up the book of knowledge. And therefore rather than to swell the leaves of learning by fruitless repetitions, to sing the same song in all ages, nor adventure at essays beyond the attempt of others, many would be content that some would write like Helmont or Paracelsus ; and be willing to endure the monstrosity of some opinions, for divers singular notions requiting such aberrations.

VI. Despise not the obliquities of younger ways, nor despair of better things whereof there is yet no prospect. Who would imagine that Diogenes, who in his younger days was a falsifier of money, should in the after-course of his life be so great a contemner of metal ? Some negroes, who believe the resurrection, think that they shall rise white.* Even in this life regeneration may imitate resurrection, our black and vicious tinctures may wear off, and goodness clothe us with candour. Good admonitions knock not always in vain. There will be signal examples of God's mercy, and the angels must not want their charitable rejoices for the conversion of lost sinners. Figures of most angles do nearest approach unto circles, which have no angles at all. Some may be near unto goodness, who are conceived far from it, and many things happen, not

* Mandelslo.

likely to ensue from any promises of antecedencies. Culpable beginnings have found commendable conclusions, and infamous courses pious retractions. Detestable sinners have proved exemplary converts on earth, and may be glorious in the apartment of Mary Magdalene in heaven. Men are not the same through all divisions of their ages. Time, experience, self-reflections, and God's mercies, make in some well-tempered minds a kind of translation before death, and men to differ from themselves as well as from other persons. Hereof the old world afforded many examples, to the infamy of latter ages, wherein men too often live by the rule of their inclinations; so that, without any astral prediction, the first day gives the last.* Men are commonly as they were, or rather, as bad dispositions run into worser habits, the evening doth not crown, but sourly conclude the day.

VII. If the Almighty will not spare us according to his merciful capitulation at Sodom; if his goodness please not to pass over a great deal of bad for a small pittance of good, or to look upon us in the lump; there is slender hope for mercy, or sound presumption of fulfilling half his will, either in persons or nations; they who excel in some virtues being so often defective in others; few men driving at the extent and amplitude of goodness, but computing themselves by their best parts, and others by their worst, are content to rest in those virtues which others commonly want. Which makes this speckled face of honesty in the world; and which was the imperfection of the old philosophers and great pretenders unto virtue, who well declining the gaping

* Primusque dies dedit extremum.

vices of intemperance, incontinency, violence, and oppression, were yet blindly peccant in iniquities of closer faces; were envious, malicious, contemners, scoffers, censurers, and stufft with vizard vices, no less depraving the ethereal particle and diviner portion of man. For envy, malice, hatred, are the qualities of Satan, close and dark like himself; and where such brands smoke, the soul cannot be white. Vice may be had at all prices; expensive and costly iniquities, which make the noise, cannot be every man's sins: but the soul may be foully inquinated at a very low rate, and a man may be cheaply vicious, to the perdition of himself.

VIII. Opinion rides upon the neck of reason, and men are happy, wise, or learned, according as that empress shall set them down in the register of reputation. However weigh not thyself in the scales of thy own opinion, but let the judgment of the judicious be the standard of thy merit. Self-estimation is a flatterer too readily intitling us unto knowledge and abilities, which others solicitously labour after, and doubtfully think they attain. Surely such confident tempers do pass their days in best tranquillity, who, resting in the opinion of their own abilities, are happily gulled by such contention; wherein pride, self-conceit, confidence, and opiniatrity, will hardly suffer any to complain of imperfection. To think themselves in the right, or all that right, or only that, which they do or think, is a fallacy of high content; though others laugh in their sleeves, and look upon them as in a deluded state of judgment: wherein notwithstanding 'twere but a civil piece of complacency to suffer them to sleep who would not wake, to let them rest in their securities, nor by dissent or opposition to stagger their contentments.

IX. Since the brow speaks often true, since eyes and noses have tongues, and the countenance proclaims the heart and inclinations ; let observation so far instruct thee in physiognomical lines, as to be some rule for thy distinction, and guide for thy affection unto such as look most like men. Mankind, methinks, is comprehended in a few faces, if we exclude all visages which any way participate of symmetries and schemes of look common unto other animals. For as though man were the extract of the world, in whom all were *in coagulato*, which in their forms were *in soluto* and at extension ; we often observe that men do most act those creatures, whose constitution, parts, and complexion, do most predominate in their mixtures. This is a corner-stone in physiognomy, and holds some truth not only in particular persons but also in whole nations. There are, therefore, provincial faces, national lips and noses, which testify not only the natures of those countries, but of those which have them elsewhere. Thus we may make England the whole earth, dividing it not only into Europe, Asia, Africa, but the particular regions thereof, and may in some latitude affirm, that there are Egyptians, Scythians, Indians, among us ; who though born in England, yet carry the faces and air of those countries, and are also agreeable and correspondent unto their natures. Faces look uniformly unto our eyes ; how they appear unto some animals of a more piercing or differing sight, who are able to discover the inequalities, rubs, and hairiness of the skin, is not without good doubt ; and therefore in reference unto man, Cupid is said to be blind. Affection should not be too sharp-eyed, and love is not to be made by magnifying glasses. If things were seen as they truly are, the beauty of bodies

would be much abridged. And therefore, the wise Contriver hath drawn the pictures and outsides of things softly and amiably unto the natural edge of our eyes, not leaving them able to discover those uncomely asperities which make oyster-shells in good faces, and hedgehogs even in Venus's moles.

X. Court not felicity too far, and weary not the favourable hand of fortune. Glorious actions have their times, extent, and non ultras. To put no end unto attempts were to make prescription of successes, and to bespeak unhappiness at the last. For the line of our lives is drawn with white and black vicissitudes, wherein the extremes hold seldom one complexion. That Pompey should obtain the surname of great at twenty-five years, that men in their young and active day should be fortunate and perform notable things, is no observation of deep wonder, they having the strength of their fates before them, nor yet acted their parts in the world, for which they were brought into it: whereas men of years, matured for counsels and designs, seem to be beyond the vigour of their active fortunes, and high exploits of life, providentially ordained unto ages best agreeable unto them. And, therefore, many brave men finding their fortune grow faint, and feeling its declination, have timely withdrawn themselves from great attempts, and so escaped the ends of mighty men, disproportionate to their beginnings. But magnanimous thoughts have so dimmed the eyes of many, that forgetting the very essence of fortune, and the vicissitude of good and evil, they apprehend no bottom in felicity; and so have been still tempted on unto mighty actions, reserved for their destructions. For fortune lays the plot of our adversities in the foundation of our felicities, blessing us in the first

quareate to blast us more sharply in the last. And since in the highest felicities there lieth a capacity of the lowest miseries, she hath this advantage from our happiness to make us truly miserable. For to become acutely miserable we are to be first happy. Affliction smarts most in the most happy state, as having somewhat in it of Belisarius at beggars' bush, or Bajazet in the grate. And this the fallen angels severely understand, who having acted their first part in heaven, are made sharply miserable by transition, and more afflictively feel the contrary state of hell.

XI. Carry no careless eye upon the unexpected scenes of things ; but ponder the acts of Providence in the publick ends of great and notable men, set out unto the view of all for no common memorandums. The tragical exits and unexpected periods of some eminent persons cannot but amuse considerate observators ; wherein notwithstanding, most men seem to see by extramission, without reception or self-reflection, and conceive themselves unconcerned by the fallacy of their own exemption : whereas the mercy of God hath singled out but few to be the signals of his justice, leaving the generality of mankind to the pedagogy of example. But the inadvertency of our natures not well apprehending this favourable method and merciful decimation, and that he sheweth in some what others also deserve, they entertain no sense of his hand beyond the stroke of themselves. Whereupon the whole becomes necessarily punished, and the contracted hand of God extended unto universal judgments ; from whence nevertheless, the stupidity of our tempers receives but faint impressions, and in the most tragical state of times holds but starts of good motions. So that to continue us in goodness there must be iterated returns

of misery, and a circulation in afflictions is necessary. And since we cannot be wise by warnings, since plagues are insignificant, except we be personally plagued, since also we cannot be punished unto amendment by proxy or commutation, nor by vicinity, but contaction; there is an unhappy necessity that we must smart in our own skins, and the provoked arm of the Almighty must fall upon ourselves. The capital sufferings of others are rather our monitions than acquitments. There is but one who died salvifically for us, and able to say unto death, hitherto shalt thou go and no further; only one enlivening death, which makes gardens of graves, and that which was sowed in corruption to arise and flourish in glory; when death itself shall die, and living shall have no period, when the damned shall mourn at the funeral of death, when life not death shall be the wages of sin, when the second death shall prove a miserable life, and destruction shall be courted.

XII. Although their thoughts may seem too severe, who think that few ill-natured men go to heaven; yet it may be acknowledged that good-natured persons are best founded for that place; who enter the world with good dispositions, and natural graces, more ready to be advanced by impressions from above, and christianized unto pieties; who carry about them plain and downright-dealing minds, humility, mercy, charity, and virtues acceptable to God and man. But whatever success they may have as to heaven, they are the acceptable men on earth, and happy is he who hath his quiver full of them for his friends. These are not the dens wherein falsehood lurks, and hypocrisy hides its head, wherein frowardness makes its nest, or where malice, hard-heartedness, and oppression love to dwell; not those by

whom the poor get little, and the rich sometime lose all ; men not of retracted looks, but who carry their hearts in their faces, and need not to be looked upon with perspectives ; not sordidly or mischievously ingrateful ; who cannot learn to ride upon the neck of the afflicted, nor load the heavy laden, but who keep the temple of Janus shut by peaceable and quiet tempers ; who make not only the best friends, but the best enemies as easier to forgive than offend, and ready to pass by the second offence before they avenge the first ; who make natural royalists, obedient subjects, kind and merciful princes, verified in our own, one of the best-natured kings of this throne. Of the old Roman emperours the best were the best natured ; though they made but a small number, and might be writ in a ring. Many of the rest were as bad men as princes ; humourists rather than of good humours ; and of good natural parts rather than of good natures ; which did but arm their bad inclinations, and make them wittily wicked.

XIII. With what shift and pains we come into the world, we remember not ; but 'tis commonly found no easy matter to get out of it. Many have studied to exasperate the ways of death, but fewer hours have been spent to soften that necessity. That the smoothest way unto the grave is made by bleeding, as common opinion presumeth, beside the sick and fainting languors, which accompany that effusion, the experiment in Lucan and Seneca will make us doubt ; under which the noble stoick so deeply laboured, that to conceal his affliction he was fain to retire from the sight of his wife, and not ashamed to implore the merciful hand of his physician to shorten his misery therein. Ovid,* the old heroes,

* Demito naufragium, mors mihi munus erit.

and the stoicks, who were so afraid of drowning, as dreading thereby the extinction of their soul, which they conceived to be a fire, stood probably in fear of an easier way of death ; wherein the water, entering the possessions of air, makes a temperate suffocation, and kills as it were without a fever. Surely many, who have had the spirit to destroy themselves, have not been ingenious in the contrivance thereof. 'Twas a dull way practised by Themistocles* to overwhelm himself with bulls-blood, who, being an Athenian, might have held an easier theory of death from the state-potion of his country ; from which Socrates in Plato seemed not to suffer much more than from the fit of an ague. Cato is much to be pitied, who mangled himself with poniards ; and Hannibal seems more subtle, who carried his delivery not in the point, but the pummel of his sword.†

The Egyptians were merciful contrivers, who destroyed their malefactors by asps, charming their senses into an invincible sleep, and killing as it were with Hermes his rod. The Turkish emperour‡ odious for other cruelty, was herein a remarkable master of mercy, killing his favourite in his sleep, and sending him from the shade into the house of darkness. He who had been thus destroyed would hardly have bled at the presence of his destroyer ; when men are already dead by metaphor, and pass but from one sleep unto another, wanting herein the eminent part of severity, to feel themselves to die, and escaping the sharpest attendant of death, the lively apprehension thereof. But to learn to die, is better

* Plutarch.

† Pummel, wherein he is said to have carried something whereby upon a struggle or despair he might deliver himself from all misfortunes.

‡ Solymon.—*Turkish History*.

than to study the ways of dying. Death will find some ways to untie or cut the most gordian knots of life, and make men's miseries as mortal as themselves: whereas evil spirits, as undying substances, are unseparable from their calamities; and therefore they everlastingly struggle under their angustias, and bound up with immortality can never get out of themselves.

THE THIRD PART.

I. 'Tis hard to find a whole age to imitate, or what century to propose for example. Some have been far more approvable than others; but virtue and vice, panegyricks and satires, scatteringly to be found in all. History sets down not only things laudable, but abominable; things which should never have been or never have been known; so that noble patterns must be fetcht here and there from single persons rather than whole nations, and from all nations rather than any one. The world was early bad, and the first sin the most deplorable of any. The younger world afforded the oldest men, and perhaps the best and the worst, when length of days made virtuous habits heroical and immovable, vicious, inveterate and irreclaimable. And since 'tis said that the imaginations of their hearts were evil, only evil, and continually evil, it may be feared that their sins held pace with their lives; and their longevity swelling their impieties, the longanimity of God would no longer endure such vivacious abominations. Their impieties were surely of a deep dye, which required the whole element of water to wash them away, and overwhelmed their memories with themselves; and so shut up the first windows of time, leaving no histories of those longeuous generations, when men might have been properly historians, when Adam might have read

long lectures unto Methuselah, and Methuselah unto Noah. For had we been happy in just historical accounts of that unparalleled world, we might have been acquainted with wonders, and have understood not a little of the acts and undertakings of Moses his mighty men, and men of renown of old; which might have enlarged our thoughts, and made the world older unto us. For the unknown part of time shortens the estimation, if not the compute of it. What hath escaped our knowledge falls not under our consideration, and what is and will be latent is little better than non-existent.

II. Some things are dictated for our instruction, some acted for our imitation, wherein 'tis best to ascend unto the highest conformity, and to the honour of the exemplar. He honours God who imitates him. For what we virtuously imitate we approve and admire; and since we delight not to imitate inferiours, we aggrandize and magnify those we imitate; since also we are most apt to imitate those we love, we testify our affection in our imitation of the inimitable. To affect to be like, may be no imitation: to act, and not to be what we pretend to imitate, is but a mimical conformation, and carrieth no virtue in it. Lucifer imitated not God when he said he would be like the Highest, and he imitated not Jupiter who counterfeited thunder. Where imitation can go no farther, let admiration step on, whereof there is no end in the wisest form of men. Even angels and spirits have enough to admire in their sublimer natures, admiration being the act of the creature, and not of God, who doth not admire himself. Created natures allow of swelling hyperboles; nothing can be said hyperbolically of God, nor will his attri-

butes admit of expressions above their own exuperances. Trismegistus his circle, whose centre is everywhere, and circumference nowhere, was no hyperbole. Words cannot exceed, where they cannot express enough. Even the most winged thoughts fall at the setting out, and reach not the portal of Divinity.

III. In bivious theorems and Janus-faced doctrines let virtuous considerations state the determination. Look upon opinions as thou dost upon the moon, and choose not the dark hemisphere for thy contemplation. Embrace not the opacous and blind side of opinions, but that which looks most luciferously or influentially unto goodness. 'Tis better to think that there are guardian spirits, than that there are no spirits to guard us; that vicious persons are slaves, than that there is any servitude in virtue; that times past have been better than times present, than that times were always bad; and that to be men it sufficeth to be no better than men in all ages, and so promiscuously to swim down the turbid stream, and make up the grand confusion. Sow not thy understanding with opinions which make nothing of iniquities, and fallaciously extenuate transgressions. Look upon vices and vicious objects, with hyperbolical eyes, and rather enlarge their dimensions, that their unseen deformities may not escape thy sense, and their poisonous parts and stings may appear massy and monstrous unto thee; for the undiscerned particles and atoms of evil deceive us, and we are undone by the invisibles of seeming goodness. We are only deceived in what is not discerned, and to err is but to be blind or dim-sighted as to some perceptions.

IV. To be honest in a right line* and virtuous by

* *Línea recta brevissima.*

epitome, be firm unto such principles of goodness, as carry in them volumes of instruction and may abridge thy labour. And since instructions are many, hold close unto those whereon the rest depend. So may we have all in a few, and the law and the prophets in a rule; the sacred writ in stenography, and the Scripture in a nutshell. To pursue the osseous and solid part of goodness, which gives stability and rectitude to all the rest; to settle on fundamental virtues, and bid early defiance unto mother-vices, which carry in their bowels the seminals of other iniquities, makes a short cut in goodness, and strikes not off an head but the whole neck of hydra. For we are carried into the dark lake, like the Egyptian river into the sea, by seven principal ostiaries; the mother-sins of that number are the deadly engines of evil spirits that undo us, and even evil spirits themselves, and he who is under the chains thereof is not without a possession. Mary Magdalene had more than seven devils, if these with their imps were in her, and he who is thus possessed may literally be named Legion. Where such plants grow and prosper, look for no champion or region void of thorns, but productions like the tree of Goa* and forests of abomination.

V. Guide not the hand of God, nor order the finger of the Almighty, unto thy will and pleasure; but sit quiet in the soft showers of providence, and favourable distributions in this world, either to thyself or others. And since not only judgments have their errands, but mercies their commissions, snatch not at every favour, nor think thyself passed by, if they fall upon thy neigh-

* Arbor Goa de Ruyz, or Ficus Indica, whose branches send down shoots which root in the ground, from whence there successively rise others, till one tree becomes a wood.

bour. Rake not up envious displacements at things successful unto others, which the wise Disposer of all thinks not fit for thyself. Reconcile the events of things unto both beings, that is, of this world and the next; so will there not seem so many riddles in providence, nor various inequalities in the dispensation of things below. If thou dost not anoint thy face, yet put not on sack-cloth at the felicities of others. Repining at the good draws on rejoicing at the evils of others, and so falls into that inhuman vice for which so few languages have a name.* The blessed spirits above rejoice at our happiness below; but to be glad at the evils of one another is beyond the malignity of hell, and falls not on evil spirits, who, though they rejoice at our unhappiness, take no pleasure at the afflictions of their own society or of their fellow natures. Degenerous heads! who must be fain to learn from such examples, and to be taught from the school of hell.

VI. Grain not thy vicious stains, nor deepen those swart tinctures, which temper, infirmity, or ill habits have set upon thee; and fix not, by iterated depravations, what time might efface or virtuous washes expunge. He who thus still advanceth in iniquity, deepeneth his deformed hue, turns a shadow into night, and makes himself a negro in the black jaundice; and so becomes one of those lost ones, the disproportionate pores of whose brains afford no entrance unto good motions, but reflect and frustrate all counsels, deaf unto the thunder of the laws, and rocks unto the cries of charitable commiserators. He who hath had the patience of Diogenes, to make orations unto statues, may

* *Eπιμαρτυρία.*

more sensibly apprehend how all words fall to the ground, spent upon such a surd and earless generation of men, stupid unto all instruction, and rather requiring an exorcist than an orator for their conversion.

VII. Burden not the back of Aries, Leo, or Taurus, with thy faults, nor make Saturn, Mars, or Venus, guilty of thy follies. Think not to fasten thy imperfections on the stars, and so despairingly conceive thyself under a fatality of being evil. Calculate thyself within, seek not thyself in the moon, but in thine own orb or microcosmical circumference. Let celestial aspects admonish and advertise, not conclude and determine thy ways. For since good and bad stars moralize not our actions, and neither excuse or commend, acquit or condemn our good or bad deeds at the present or last bar, since some are astrologically well disposed who are morally highly vicious; not celestial figures, but virtuous schemes must denominate and state our actions. If we rightly understood the names whereby God calleth the stars, if we knew his name for the dogstar, or by what appellation Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn, obey his will, it might be a welcome accession unto astrology, which speaks great things, and is fain to make use of appellations from Greek and barbarick systems. Whatever influences, impulsions, or inclinations there be from the lights above, it were a piece of wisdom to make one of those wise men* who overrule their stars, and with their own militia contend with the host of heaven. Unto which attempt there want no auxiliaries from the whole strength of morality, supplies from Christian ethicks, influences also and illu-

* *Sapiens dominabitur astris.*

minations from above, more powerful than the lights of heaven.

VIII. Confound not the distinctions of thy life which nature hath divided ; that is, youth, adolescence, manhood, and old age ; nor in these divided periods, wherein thou art in a manner four, conceive thyself but one. Let every division be happy in its proper virtues, nor one vice run through all. Let each distinction have its salutary transition, and critically deliver thee from the imperfections of the former ; so ordering the whole, that prudence and virtue may have the largest section. Do as a child but when thou art a child, and ride not on a reed at twenty. He who hath not taken leave of the follies of his youth, and in his maturer state scarce got out of that division, disproportionately divideth his days, crowds up the latter part of his life, and leaves too narrow a corner for the age of wisdom, and so hath room to be a man scarce longer than he hath been a youth. Rather than to make this confusion, anticipate the virtues of age, and live long without the infirmities of it. So may'st thou count up thy days as some do Adam's,* that is by anticipation ; so may'st thou be coetaneous unto thy elders, and a father unto thy contemporaries.

IX. While others are curious in the choice of good air, and chiefly solicitous for healthful habitations, study thou conversation, and be critical in thy consortium. The aspects, conjunctions, and configurations of the stars, which mutually diversify, intend, or qualify their influences, are but the varieties of their nearer or farther conversation with one another, and like the consor-

* Adam, thought to be created in the state of man, about thirty years old.

tion of men, whereby they become better or worse, and even exchange their natures. Since men live by examples, and will be imitating something, order thy imitation to thy improvement, not thy ruin. Look not for roses in Attalus his garden,* or wholesome flowers in a venomous plantation. And since there is scarce any one bad, but some others are the worse for him, tempt not contagion by proximity, and hazard not thyself in the shadow of corruption. He who hath not early suffered this shipwreck, and in his younger days escaped this Charybdis may make a happy voyage, and not come in with black sails into the port. Self-conversation, or to be alone, is better than such consortium. Some schoolmen tell us, that he is properly alone, with whom in the same place there is no other of the same species. Nabuchodonozor was alone, though among the beasts of the field; and a wise man may be tolerably said to be alone, though with a rabble of people little better than beasts about him. Unthinking heads, who have not learned to be alone, are in a prison to themselves, if they be not also with others; whereas, on the contrary, they whose thoughts are in a fair, and hurry within, are sometimes fain to retire into company, to be out of the crowd of themselves. He who must needs have company, must needs have sometimes bad company. Be able to be alone. Lose not the advantage of solitude, and the society of thyself, nor be only content, but delight to be alone and single with Omnipresence. He who is thus prepared, the day is not uneasy nor the night black unto him. Darkness may bound his eyes, not his imagination. In his bed he may

* Attalus made a garden which contained only venomous plants.

lie, like Pompey and his sons,* in all quarters of the earth ; may speculate the universe, and enjoy the whole world in the hermitage of himself. Thus the old ascetick Christians found a paradise in a desert, and with little converse on earth held a conversation in heaven ; thus they astronomized in caves, and though they beheld not the stars, had the glory of heaven before them.

X. Let the characters of good things stand indelibly in thy mind, and thy thoughts be active on them. Trust not too much unto suggestions from reminiscential amulets, or artificial memorandums. Let the mortifying Janus of Covarrubias be in thy daily thoughts, not only on thy hand and signets.† Rely not alone upon silent and dumb remembrances. Behold not deaths'-heads till thou dost not see them, nor look upon mortifying objects till thou overlookest them. Forget not how assuefaction unto any thing minorates the passion from it, how constant objects lose their hints, and steal an inadvertisement upon us. There is no excuse to forget what every thing prompts unto us. To thoughtful observators, the whole world is a phylactery, and every thing we see an item of the wisdom, power, or goodness of God. Happy are they who verify their amulets, and make their phylacteries speak in their lives and actions. To run on in despight of the revulsions and pull-backs of such remoras, aggravates our transgressions. When deaths'-heads on our hands have no

* Pompeios Juvenes Asia atque Europa, sed ipsum terra tegit Libyes.

† Don Sebastian de Covarrubias, writ three centuries of moral emblems in Spanish. In the 88th of the second century he sets down two faces averse, and conjoined Janus-like ; the one a gallant beautiful face, the other a death's-head face, with this motto out of Ovid's Metamorphosis,

Quid fuerim, quid simque, vide.

influence upon our heads, and fleshless cadavers abate not the exorbitances of the flesh ; when crucifixes upon men's hearts suppress not their bad commotions, and his image who was murdered for us withholds not from blood and murder ; phylacteries prove but formalities, and their despised hints sharpen our condemnations.

XI. Look not for whales in the Euxine sea, or expect great matters where they are not to be found. Seek not for profundity in shallowness, or fertility in a wilderness. Place not the expectation of great happiness here below, or think to find heaven on earth ; wherein we must be content with embryon-felicities, and fruitions of doubtless faces. For the circle of our felicities makes but short arches. In every clime we are in a periscian state, and with our light our shadow and darkness walk about us. Our contentments stand upon the tops of pyramids ready to fall off, and the insecurity of their enjoyments abrupteth our tranquillities. What we magnify is magnificent, but, like to the colossus, noble without, stufft with rubbidge and coarse metal within. Even the sun, whose glorious outside we behold, may have dark and smoky entrails. In vain we admire the lustre of any thing seen ; that which is truly glorious is invisible. Paradise was but a part of the earth, lost not only to our fruition but our knowledge. And if, according to old dictates, no man can be said to be happy before death, the happiness of this life goes for nothing before it be over, and while we think ourselves happy we do but usurp that name. Certainly true beatitude groweth not on earth, nor hath this world in it the expectations we have of it. He swims in oil, and can hardly avoid sinking, who hath such light foundations to support him. 'Tis therefore happy that we have two

worlds to hold on. To enjoy true happiness we must travel into a very far country, and even out of ourselves ; for the pearl we seek for is not to be found in the Indian, but in the empyrean ocean.

XII. Answer not the spur of fury, and be not prodigal or prodigious in revenge. Make not one in the *Historia horribilis* ;* slay not thy servant for a broken glass, nor pound him in a mortar who offendeth thee ; supererogate not in the worst sense, and overdo not the necessities of evil ; humour not the injustice of revenge. Be not stoically mistaken in the equality of sins, nor commutatively iniquitous in the valuation of transgressions ; but weigh them in the scales of heaven, and by the weights of righteous reason. Think that revenge too high, which is but level with the offence. Let thy arrows of revenge fly short, or be aimed like those of Jonathan, to fall beside the mark. Too many there be to whom a dead enemy smells well, and who find musk and amber in revenge. The ferity of such minds holds no rule in retaliations, requiring too often a head for a tooth, and the supreme revenge for trespasses which a night's rest should obliterate. But patient meekness takes injuries like pills, not chewing but swallowing them down, laconically suffering, and silently passing them over ; while angered pride makes a noise, like Homeric Mars,† at every scratch of offences. Since women do most delight in revenge, it may seem but feminine manhood to be vindictive. If thou must needs have thy revenge of thine enemy, with a soft tongue break

* A book so intitled, wherein are sundry horrid accounts.

† Tu miser exclamas, ut Stentora vincere possis,

Vel potius quantum Gradivus Homericus.—*Juv.*

his bones,* heap coals of fire on his head, forgive him and enjoy it. To forgive our enemies is a charming way of revenge, and a short Cæsarian conquest, overcoming without a blow ; laying our enemies at our feet, under sorrow, shame, and repentance ; leaving our foes our friends, and solicitously inclined to grateful retaliations. Thus to return upon our adversaries is a healing way of revenge ; and to do good for evil a soft and melting ultion, a method taught from heaven to keep all smooth on earth. Common forcible ways make not an end of evil, but leave hatred and malice behind them. An enemy thus reconciled is little to be trusted, as wanting the foundation of love and charity, and but for a time restrained by disadvantage or inability. If thou hast not mercy for others, yet be not cruel unto thyself. To ruminante upon evils, to make critical notes upon injuries, and be too acute in their apprehensions, is to add unto our own tortures, to feather the arrows of our enemies, to lash ourselves with the scorpions of our foes, and to resolve to sleep no more. For injuries long dreamt on take away at last all rest ; and he sleeps but like Regulus, who busieth his head about them.

XIII. Amuse not thyself about the riddles of future things. Study prophecies when they are become histories, and past hovering in their causes. Eye well things past and present, and let conjectural sagacity suffice for things to come. There is a sober latitude for prescience in contingencies of discoverable tempers, whereby discerning heads see sometimes beyond their eyes, and wise men become prophetical. Leave cloudy predictions to their periods, and let appointed seasons have the

* A soft tongue breaketh the bones.—*Prov. xxv. 15.*

lot of their accomplishments. 'Tis too early to study such prophecies before they have been long made, before some train of their causes have already taken fire, laying open in part what lay obscure and before buried unto us. For the voice of prophecies is like that of whispering-places; they who are near or at a little distance hear nothing, those at the farthest extremity will understand all. But a retrograde cognition of times past, and things which have already been, is more satisfactory than a suspended knowledge of what is yet unexistent. And the greatest part of time being already wrapt up in things behind us, it's now somewhat late to bait after things before us; for futurity still shortens, and time present sucks in time to come. What is prophetical in one age proves historical in another, and so must hold on unto the last of time, where there will be no room for prediction; when Janus shall lose one face, and the long beard of time shall look like those of David's servants, shorn away upon one side, and when, if the expected Elias should appear, he might say much of what is past, not much of what's to come.

XIV. Live unto the dignity of thy nature, and leave it not disputable at last, whether thou hast been a man; or since thou art a composition of man and beast, how thou hast predominantly passed thy days, to state the denomination. Unman not therefore thyself by a bestial transformation, nor realize old fables. Expose not thyself by four-footed manners unto monstrous draughts, and caricatura representations. Think not after the old Pythagorean conceit, what beast thou may'st be after death. Be not under any brutal metempsuchosis while thou livest, and walkest about erectly under the scheme of man. In thine own circumference, as in that of the

earth, let the rational horizon be larger than the sensible, and the circle of reason than of sense. Let the divine part be upward, and the region of beast below. Otherwise, 'tis but to live invertedly, and with thy head unto the heels of thy antipodes. Desert not thy title to a divine particle and union with invisibles. Let true knowledge and virtue tell the lower world thou art a part of the higher. Let thy thoughts be of things which have not entered into the hearts of beasts ; think of things long past, and long to come ; acquaint thyself with the choragium of the stars, and consider the vast expansion beyond them. Let intellectual tubes give thee a glance of things which visive organs reach not. Have a glimpse of incomprehensibles ; and thoughts of things which thoughts but tenderly touch. Lodge immaterials in thy head ; ascend unto invisibles ; fill thy spirit with spirituials, with the mysteries of faith, the magnalities of religion, and thy life with the honour of God ; without which, though giants in wealth and dignity, we are but dwarfs and pygmies in humanity, and may hold a pitiful rank in that triple division of mankind into heroes, men, and beasts. For though human souls are said to be equal, yet is there no small inequality in their operations ; some maintain the allowable station of men, many are far below it ; and some have been so divine, as to approach the apogeeum of their natures, and to be in the confinium of spirits.

XV. Behold thyself by inward opticks and the crystalline of thy soul. Strange it is that in the most perfect sense there should be so many fallacies, that we are fain to make a doctrine, and often to see by art. But the greatest imperfection is in our inward sight, that is, to be ghosts unto our own eyes, and while we are so sharp-

sighted as to look through others, to be invisible unto ourselves; for the inward eyes are more fallacious than the outward. The vices we scoff at in others laugh at us within ourselves. Avarice, pride, falsehood, lie undiscerned and blindly in us, even to the age of blindness; and therefore, to see ourselves interiourly we are fain to borrow other men's eyes; wherein true friends are good informers, and censurers no bad friends. Conscience only, that can see without light, sits in the areopagy and dark tribunal of our hearts, surveying our thoughts and condemning their obliquities. Happy is that state of vision that can see without light, though all should look as before the creation, when there was not an eye to see, or light to actuate a vision: wherein notwithstanding, obscurity is only imaginable respectively unto eyes; for unto God there was none, eternal light was ever; created light was for the creation, not himself, and as he saw before the sun, may still also see without it. In the city of the new Jerusalem there is neither sun nor moon; where glorified eyes must see by the archetypal sun, or the light of God, able to illuminate intellectual eyes, and make unknown visions. Intuitive perceptions in spiritual beings may perhaps hold some analogy unto vision; but yet how they see us, or one another, what eye, what light, or what perception is required unto their intuition, is yet dark unto our apprehension; and even how they see God, or how unto our glorified eyes the beatifical vision will be celebrated, another world must tell us, when perceptions will be new and we may hope to behold invisibles.

XVI. When all looks fair about, and thou seest not a cloud so big as a hand to threaten thee, forget not the wheel of things; think of sullen vicissitudes, but beat not

thy brains to foreknow them. Be armed against such obscurities rather by submission than fore-knowledge. The knowledge of future evils mortifies present felicities, and there is more content in the uncertainty or ignorance of them. This favour our Saviour vouchsafed unto Peter, when he foretold not his death in plain terms, and so by an ambiguous and cloudy delivery dampt not the spirit of his disciples. But in the assured fore-knowledge of the deluge Noah lived many years under the affliction of a flood, and Jerusalem was taken, unto Jeremy, before it was besieged. And therefore the wisdom of astrologers, who speak of future things, hath wisely softened the severity of their doctrines ; and even in their sad predictions, while they tell us of inclination not coaction from the stars, they kill us not with Stygian oaths and merciless necessity, but leave us hopes of evasion.

XVII. If thou hast the brow to endure the name of traitor, perjured, or oppressor, yet cover thy face when ingratitude is thrown at thee. If that degenerous vice possess thee, hide thyself in the shadow of thy shame, and pollute not noble society. Grateful ingenuities are content to be obliged within some compass of retribution, and being depressed by the weight of iterated favours, may so labour under their inabilities of requital, as to abate the content from kindnesses. But narrow self-ended souls make prescription of good offices, and obliged by often favours think others still due unto them ; whereas, if they but once fail, they prove so perversely ungrateful, as to make nothing of former courtesies, and to bury all that's past. Such tempers pervert the generous course of things ; for they discourage the inclinations of noble minds, and make bene-

ficiency cool unto acts of obligation, whereby the grateful world should subsist, and have their consolation. Common gratitude must be kept alive by the additionary fuel of new courtesies ; but generous gratitudes, though but once well obliged, without quickening repetitions or expectation of new favours, have thankful minds for ever ; for they write not their obligations in sandy but marble memories, which wear not out but with themselves.

XVIII. Think not silence the wisdom of fools, but, if rightly timed, the honour of wise men, who have not the infirmity, but the virtue of taciturnity, and speak not out of the abundance, but the well-weighed thoughts of their hearts. Such silence may be eloquence, and speak thy worth above the power of words. Make such a one thy friend, in whom princes may be happy, and great counsels successful. Let him have the key of thy heart, who hath the lock of his own, which no temptation can open ; where thy secrets may lastingly lie, like the lamp in Olybius his urn,* alive and light, but close and invisible.

XIX. Let thy oaths be sacred, and promises be made upon the altar of thy heart. Call not Jove to witness with a stone in one hand, and a straw in another,† and so make chaff and stubble of thy vows. Worldly spirits, whose interest is their belief, make cobwebs of obligations, and, if they can find ways to elude the urn of the prætor, will trust the thunderbolt of Jupiter ; and therefore if they should as deeply swear as Osman to

* Which after many hundred years was found burning under ground and went out as soon as the air came to it.

† *Jovem lapidem jurare.*

Bethlem Gabor,* yet whether they would be bound by those chains, and not find ways to cut such Gordian knots, we could have no just assurance. But honest men's words are Stygian oaths, and promises inviolable. These are not the men for whom the fetters of law were first forged; they needed not the solemnness of oaths;† by keeping their faith they swear, and evacuate such confirmations.

XX. Though the world be histrionical, and most men live ironically, yet be thou what thou singly art, and personate only thyself. Swim smoothly in the stream of thy nature, and live but one man. To single hearts doubling is discrediting; such tempers must sweat to dissemble, and prove but hypocritical hypocrites. Simulation must be short; men do not easily continue a counterfeiting life, or dissemble unto death. He who counterfeites, acts a part, and is as it were out of himself; which, if long, proves so irksome that men are glad to pull off their vizards, and resume themselves again; no practice being able to naturalize such unnaturals, or make a man rest content not to be himself. And therefore since sincerity is thy temper, let veracity be thy virtue, in words, manners, and actions. To offer at iniquities, which have so little foundations in thee, were to be vicious up-hill, and strain for thy condemnation. Persons viciously inclined want no wheels to make them actively vicious, as having the elater and spring of their own natures to facilitate their iniquities. And therefore so many who are sinistrous unto good

* See the oath of Sultan Osman in his life, in the addition to Knolles his Turkish History.

† *Colendo fidem jurant.—Curtius.*

actions, are ambi-dexterous unto bad, and Vulcans in virtuous paths, Achilleses in vicious motions.

XXI. Rest not in the high-strained paradoxes of old philosophy, supported by naked reason and the reward of mortal felicity, but labour in the ethicks of faith, built upon heavenly assistance and the happiness of both beings. Understand the rules, but swear not unto the doctrines of Zeno or Epicurus. Look beyond Antoninus, and terminate not thy morals in Seneca or Epictetus. Let not the twelve, but the two tables be thy law; let Pythagoras be thy remembrancer, not thy textuary and final instructor; and learn the vanity of the world rather from Solomon than Phocylides. Sleep not in the dogmas of the Peripatus, Academy, or Porticus. Be a moralist of the mount, an Epictetus in the faith, and christianize thy notions.

XXII. In seventy or eighty years a man may have a deep gust of the world, know what it is, what it can afford, and what 'tis to have been a man. Such a latitude of years may hold a considerable corner in the general map of time, and a man may have a curt epitome of the whole course thereof in the days of his own life; may clearly see he hath but acted over his forefathers, what it was to live in ages past, and what living will be in all ages to come.

He is like to be the best judge of time who hath lived to see about the sixtieth part thereof. Persons of short times may know what 'tis to live, but not the life of man, who, having little behind them, are but Januses of one face, and know not singularities enough to raise axioms of this world; but such a compass of years will shew new examples of old things, parallelisms of occurrences through the whole course of time, and nothing

be monstrous unto him, who may in that time understand not only the varieties of men, but the variation of himself, and how many men he hath been in that extent of time.

He may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, while he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarce the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time oblivion will look upon himself. His progeny may never be his posterity ; he may go out of the world less related than he came into it; and considering the frequent mortality in friends and relations, in such a term of time he may pass away divers years in sorrow and black habits, and leave none to mourn for himself ; orbity may be his inheritance, and riches his repentance.

In such a thread of time, and long observation of men, he may acquire a physiognomical intuitive knowledge ; judge the interiours by the outside, and raise conjectures at first sight ; and knowing what men have been, what they are, what children probably will be, may in the present age behold a good part and the temper of the next ; and since so many live by the rules of constitution, and so few overcome their temperamental inclinations, make no improbable predictions.

Such a portion of time will afford a large prospect backward, and authentick reflections how far he hath performed the great intention of his being, in the honour of his Maker ; whether he hath made good the principles of his nature, and what he was made to be ; what characteristick and special mark he hath left, to be observable in his generation ; whether he hath lived to purpose or in vain, and what he hath added, acted, or performed, that might considerably speak him a man.

In such an age delights will be undelightful and pleasures grow stale unto him ; antiquated theorems will revive, and Solomon's maxims be demonstrations unto him ; hopes or presumptions be over, and despair grow up of any satisfaction below. And having been long tossed in the ocean of this world, he will by that time feel the in-draught of another, unto which this seems but preparatory, and without it of no high value. He will experimentally find the emptiness of all things, and the nothing of what is past ; and wisely grounding upon true Christian expectations, finding so much past, will wholly fix upon what is to come. He will long for perpetuity, and live as though he made haste to be happy. The last may prove the prime part of his life, and those his best days which he lived nearest heaven.

XXIII. Live happy in the Elysium of a virtuously composed mind, and let intellectual contents exceed the delights wherein mere pleasurists place their paradise. Bear not too slack reins upon pleasure, nor let complexion or contagion betray thee unto the exorbitancy of delight. Make pleasure thy recreation or intermissive relaxation, not thy Diana, life and profession. Voluptuousness is as insatiable as covetousness. Tranquillity is better than jollity, and to appease pain than to invent pleasure. Our hard entrance into the world, our miserable going out of it, our sicknesses, disturbances, and sad encounters in it, do clamorously tell us we come not into the world to run a race of delight, but to perform the sober acts and serious purposes of man ; which to omit were foully to miscarry in the advantage of humanity, to play away an uniterable life, and to have lived in vain. Forget not the capital end, and frustrate not the opportunity of once living. Dream not of any kind of

metempsuchosis or transanimation, but into thine own body, and that after a long time, and then also unto wail or bliss, according to thy first and fundamental life. Upon a curricle in this world depends a long course of the next, and upon a narrow scene here an endless expansion hereafter. In vain some think to have an end of their beings with their lives. Things cannot get out of their natures, or be or not be in despight of their constitutions. Rational existences in heaven perish not all, and but partially on earth ; that which is thus once will in some way be always ; the first living human soul is still alive, and all Adam hath found no period.

XXIV. Since the stars of heaven do differ in glory ; since it hath pleased the Almighty hand to honour the north pole with lights above the south ; since there are some stars so bright that they can hardly be looked on, some so dim that they can scarce be seen, and vast numbers not to be seen at all, even by artificial eyes ; read thou the earth in heaven, and things below from above. Look contentedly upon the scattered difference of things, and expect not equality, in lustre, dignity, or perfection, in regions or persons below ; where numerous numbers must be content to stand like lacteous or nebulous stars, little taken notice of, or dim in their generations. All which may be contentedly allowable in the affairs and ends of this world, and in suspension unto what will be in the order of things hereafter, and the new system of mankind which will be in the world to come ; when the last may be the first and the first the last ; when Lazarus may sit above Cæsar, and the just obscure on earth shall shine like the sun in heaven ; when personations shall cease, and histrionism of happy-

ness be over ; when reality shall rule, and all shall be as they shall be for ever.

XXV. When the stoick said that life would not be accepted, if it were offered unto such as knew it,* he spoke too meanly of that state of being which placeth us in the form of men. It more depreciates the value of this life, that men would not live it over again ; for although they would still live on, yet few or none can endure to think of being twice the same men upon earth, and some had rather never have lived than to tread over their days once more. Cicero in a prosperous state had not the patience to think of beginning in a cradle again. Job would not only curse the day of his nativity, but also of his renascency, if he were to act over his disasters, and the miseries of the dunghill. But the greatest underweening of this life is to undervalue that, unto which this is but exordial or a passage leading unto it. The great advantage of this mean life is thereby to stand in a capacity of a better ; for the colonies of heaven must be drawn from earth, and the sons of the first Adam are only heirs unto the second. Thus Adam came into this world with the power also of another nor only to replenish the earth, but the everlasting mansions of heaven. Where we were when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy,† he must answer who asked it, who understands entities of preordination, and beings yet unbeing ; who hath in his intellect the ideal existences of things, and entities before their extances. Though it looks but like an imaginary kind of existency to be before we are, yet

* *Vitam nemo acciperet, si daretur scientibus.—Seneca.*

† *Job xxxviii. 17.*

since we are under the decree or prescience of a sure and omnipotent Power, it may be somewhat more than a non-entity to be in that mind unto which all things are present.

XXVI. If the end of the world shall have the same foregoing signs, as the period of empires, states, and dominions in it, that is, corruption of manners, inhuman degenerations, and deluge of iniquities; it may be doubted whether that final time be so far off, of whose day and hour there can be no prescience. But while all men doubt and none can determine how long the world shall last, some may wonder that it hath spun out so long and unto our days. For if the Almighty had not determined a fixed duration unto it, according to his mighty and merciful designments in it; if he had not said unto it, as he did unto a part of it, hitherto shalt thou go and no further; if we consider the incessant and cutting provocations from the earth, it is not without amazement how his patience hath permitted so long a continuance unto it; how he who cursed the earth in the first days of the first man, and drowned it in the tenth generation after, should thus lastingly contend with flesh and yet defer the last flames. For since he is sharply provoked every moment, yet punisheth to pardon, and forgives to forgive again; what patience could be content to act over such vicissitudes, or accept of repented which must have after-penitences, his goodness can only tell us. And surely if the patience of heaven were not proportionable unto the provocations from earth, there needed an intercessor not only for the sins, but the duration of this world, and to lead it up unto the present computation. Without such a merciful longanimity, the heavens would never be so

aged as to grow old like a garment; it were in vain to infer from the doctrine of the sphere, that the time might come when Capella, a noble northern star, would have its motion in the equator; that the northern zodiacal signs would at length be the southern, the southern the northern, and Capricorn become our Cancer. However therefore the wisdom of the Creator hath ordered the duration of the world, yet since the end thereof brings the accomplishment of our happiness, since some would be content that it should have no end, since evil men and spirits do fear it may be too short, since good men hope it may not be too long; the prayer of the saints under the altar will be the supplication of the righteous world; that his mercy would abridge their languishing expectation and hasten the accomplishment of their happy state to come.

XXVII. Though good men are often taken away from the evil to come, though some in evil days have been glad that they were old, nor long to behold the iniquities of a wicked world, or judgments threatened by them; yet is it no small satisfaction unto honest minds to leave the world in virtuous well-tempered times, under a prospect of good to come, and continuation of worthy ways acceptable unto God and man. Men who die in deplorable days, which they regretfully behold, have not their eyes closed with the like content; while they cannot avoid the thoughts of proceeding or growing enormities, displeasing unto that Spirit unto whom they are then going, whose honour they desire in all times and throughout all generations. If Lucifer could be freed from his dismal place, he would little care though the rest were left behind. Too many there

may be of Nero's mind, who if their own turn were served would not regard what became of others, and, when they die themselves, care not if all perish. But good men's wishes extend beyond their lives, for the happiness of times to come and never to be known unto them. And therefore while so many question prayers for the dead, they charitably pray for those who are not yet alive ; they are not so enviously ambitious to go to heaven by themselves ; they cannot but humbly wish, that the little flock might be greater, the narrow gate wider, and that, as many are called, so not a few might be chosen.

XXVIII. That a greater number of angels remained in heaven than fell from it, the schoolmen will tell us ; that the number of blessed souls will not come short of that vast number of fallen spirits, we have the favourable calculation of others. What age or century hath sent most souls unto heaven, he can tell who vouchsafeth that honour unto them. Though the number of the blessed must be complete before the world can pass away, yet since the world itself seems in the wane, and we have no such comfortable prognosticks of latter times, since a greater part of time is spun than is to come, and the blessed roll already much replenished ; happy are those pieties which solicitously look about and hasten to make one of that already much filled and abbreviated list to come.

XXIX. Think not thy time short in this world, since the world itself is not long. The created world is but a small parenthesis in eternity, and a short interposition, for a time, between such a state of duration as was before it and may be after it. And if we should

allow of the old tradition that the world should last six thousand years, it could scarce have the name of old, since the first man lived near a sixth part thereof, and seven Methuselahs would exceed its whole duration. However to palliate the shortness of our lives, and somewhat to compensate our brief term in this world, it's good to know as much as we can of it, and also, so far as possibly in us lieth, to hold such a theory of times past, as though we had seen the same. He who hath thus considered the world, as also how therein things long past have been answered by things present, how matters in one age have been acted over in another, and how there is nothing new under the sun, may conceive himself in some manner to have lived from the beginning, and to be as old as the world; and if he should still live on, 'twould be but the same thing.

XXX. Lastly, if length of days be thy portion, make it not thy expectation. Reckon not upon long life; think every day the last, and live always beyond thy account. He that so often surviveth his expectation lives many lives, and will scarce complain of the shortness of his days. Time past is gone like a shadow; make time to come present. Approximate thy latter times by present apprehensions of them; be like a neighbour unto the grave, and think there is but little to come. And since there is something of us that will still live on, join both lives together, and live in one but for the other. He who thus ordereth the purposes of this life will never be far from the next, and is in some manner already in it, by a happy conformity, and close apprehension of it. And if, as we have elsewhere declared, any have been so happy as personally to under-

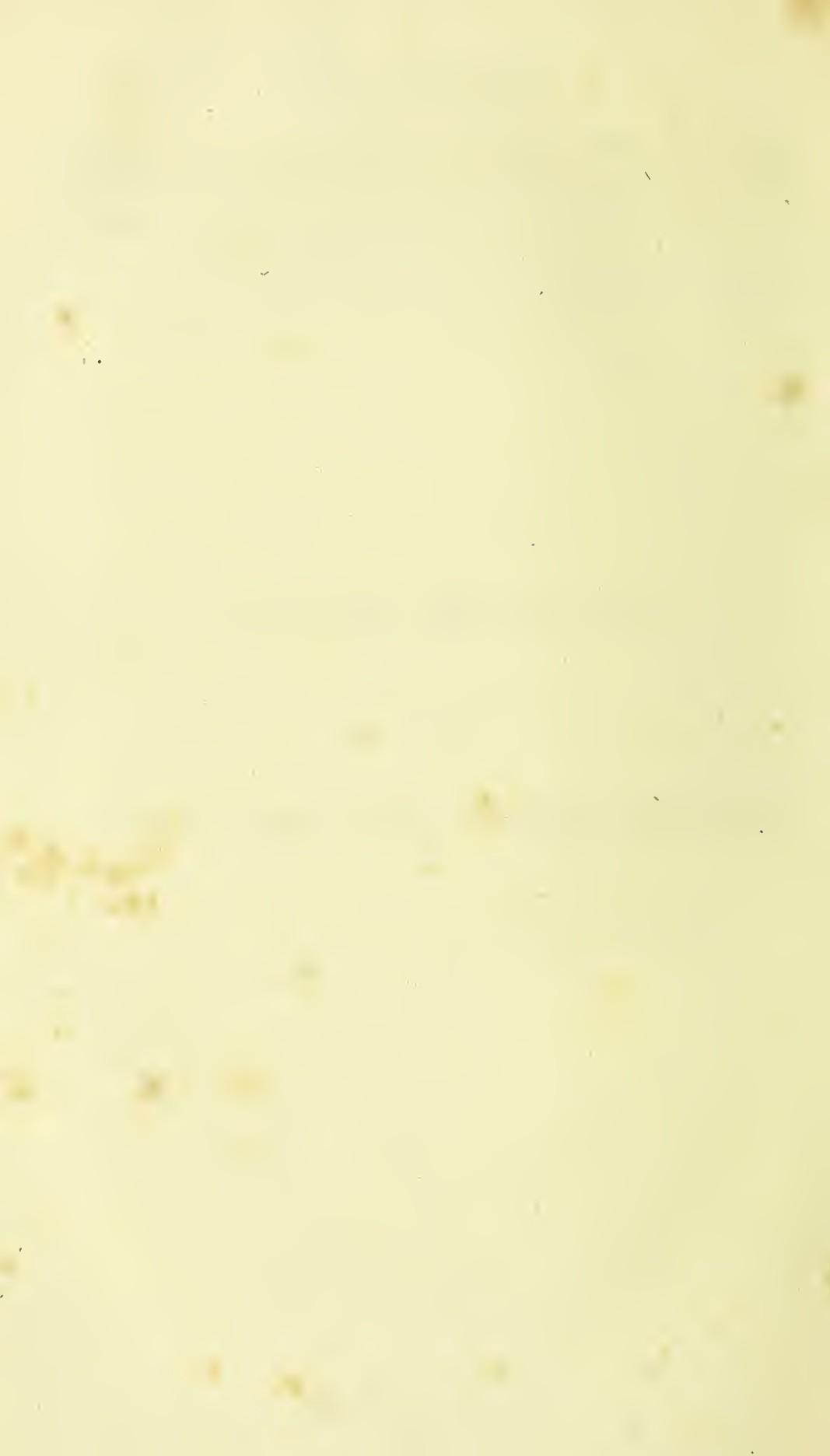
stand Christian annihilation, ecstasy, exolution, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, and ingressation into the divine shadow, according to mystical theology ; they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven, the world is in a manner over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

FINIS.

RESEMBLANT PASSAGES

IN

RELIGIO MEDICI, AND THE TASK.



The Author of THE TASK was not one of those unaffectionate beings who have neither bosom-friends nor favourite pocket-companions. Although the fact is nowhere recorded I am persuaded that RELIGIO MEDICI was one of his darling books. They who hesitate to adopt this conclusion may yet be glad to have the passages brought together on which it is founded, for it cannot be undelightful to see the unanimity of thinking which existed between two of the purest minds that have adorned our country.

Will it be thought that I mean to disparage dear Cowper by bringing forward these analogies? Far from it! they make me love him the more. There are but few books in the world, worth reading, which do not disclose their authors' acquaintance with the wisdom to be found in other books that were written before them.

J. P.

There is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience as this church of England, to whose faith I am a sworn subject.

Religio Medici, page 28.

The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man; 'tis the debt of our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts.

The wisdom of God receives small honour from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works. Those highly magnify him, whose judicious inquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration.

Teach my endeavours so thy works to read,
That learning them, in Thee I may proceed.

Rel. Med. p. 40.

What reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels; these, I confess, are the colossus and majestic pieces of his hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematicks, and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their maker.

Rel. Med. p. 42.

Thus there are two books from whence I collect my divinity; besides that written one of God, another of his servant Nature, that universal and publick manuscript that lies expans'd unto the eyes of all.

This was the scripture and theology of the heathens;

ENGLAND ! with all thy faults I love thee still,
My country !

The Task, book ii. line 206.

Brutes graze the mountain tops with faces prone
And eyes intent upon the scanty herb
It yields them ; or recumbent on its brow
Ruminate, heedless of the scene outspread
Man views it and admires, but rests content
With what he views ; the landscape has his praise
But not its author
Not so the mind that has been touched from heaven,
And in the school of sacred wisdom taught
To read his wonders.

Task. v. 785.

The soul discerns
A ray of heavenly light gilding all forms
Terrestrial, in the vast and the minute
The unambiguous footsteps of the God
Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.

Task. v. 810.

Familiar with the effect we slight the cause,
And in the constancy of Nature's course,
See nought to wonder at. Should God again,
As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
Of the undeviating and punctual sun

the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him, than its supernatural station did the children of Israel; the ordinary effect of nature wrought more admiration in them, than in the other all his miracles.

Rel. Med. p. 42.

We disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature.

Rel. Med. p. 43.

Nor do I so forget God, as to adore the name of Nature.

Rel. Med. p. 43.

God hath so contrived his work, that with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a wood; preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created; for God is like a skilful geometrician, who when more easily and with one stroke of his compass he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art.

Rel. Med. p. 43.

Thus I call the effects of Nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is, and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honour of our writing.

Rel. Med. p. 44.

How would the world admire ! but speaks it less
 An agency divine, to make him know
 His moment when to sink and when to rise
 Age after age, than to arrest his course ?

Task. vi. 121.

Not a flower
 But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,
 Of his unrivalled pencil.

Task. vi. 240.

Nature is but a name for an effect
 Whose cause is God.

Task. vi. 223.

Thou fool ! will thy discovery of the cause
 Suspend the effect, or heal it ? Has not God
 Still wrought by means since first he made the world,
 And did he not of old employ his means
 To drown it ? What is his creation less
 Than a capacious reservoir of means
 Formed for his use, and ready at his will ?

Task. ii. 196.

The mind enlightened from above
 Views Him in all : ascribes to the grand cause
 The grand effect.
 This truth philosophy, though eagle-eyed
 In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks,
 And having found his instrument, forgets
 Or disregards, or more presumptuous still,
 Denies the power that wields it.

Task. iii. 225. ii. 174.

These must not therefore be named the effects of Fortune but in a relative way and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the Providence of God; for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way, nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superiour cause.

Rel. Med. p. 46.

The doctrine of Epicurus that denied the providence of God, was no atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of his majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferiour creatures. That fatal necessity of the stoicks, is nothing but the immutable law of his will.

Rel. Med. p. 50.

That there was a deluge once, seems not to me so great a miracle as that there is not one always.

Rel. Med. p. 53.

Men's works have an age alike themselves; and though they outlive their authors, yet have they a stint and period to their duration.

Rel. Med. p. 56.

Who from the name of Saviour can condescend to the bare term of prophet.

Rel. Med. p. 57. (see *knee* in Index.)

Persecution was the first stone and basis of our faith. None can more justly boast of persecutions, and glory in the number and valour of martyrs; for to speak properly, those are true and almost only examples of fortitude.

We give to Chance, blind Chance, ourselves as blind,
 The glory of thy work.
 But Chance is not, or is not where thou reign'st ;
 Thy Providence forbids that fickle power
 (If power she be that works but to confound)
 To mix her wild vagaries with thy laws.

Task. v. 865.

Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
 The encumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
 The great Artificer of all that moves
 The stress of a continual act, the pain
 Of unremitting vigilance and care.

Task. vi. 205.

What prodigies can power divine perform
 More grand than it produces year by year ?

Task. vi. 118.

We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works
 Die too. The deep foundations that we lay
 Time ploughs them up, and not a trace remains.

Task. v. 531.

Who knee
 Thy name, adoring, and then preach thee man.

Task. vi. 886.

Patriots have toiled, and in their country's cause
 Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,
 Received proud recompence
 But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,

Those that are fetcht from the field, or drawn from the actions of the camp, are not oft-times so truly precedents of valour as of audacity, and at the best attain but to some bastard piece of fortitude. . . . If any, in that easy and active way, have done so nobly as to deserve that name, yet in the passive and more terrible piece these have surpassed, and in a more heroical way may claim the honour of that title.

Rel. Med. p. 58.

To speak properly, there is not one miracle greater than another, they being the extraordinary effect of the hand of God, to which all things are of an equal facility, and to create the world as easy as one single creature. For this is also a miracle, not only to produce effects against or above nature, but before nature; and to create nature as great a miracle as to contradict or transcend her.

Rel. Med. p. 60.

Since I have understood the occurrences of the world, and know in what counterfeit shapes and deceitful vizards times present represent on the stage things past, I do believe them little more than things to come.

Rel. Med. p. 62.

I believe that those many prodigies and ominous prognosticks which fore-run the ruins of states, princes, and private persons, are the charitable premonitions of good angels, which more careless enquiries term but the effects of chance and nature.

Rel. Med. p. 64.

To those who posted at the shrine of truth
 Have fallen in her defence. A patriot's blood,
 Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed
 And for a time insure to his loved land,
 The sweets of liberty and equal laws ;
 But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
 And win it with more pain. . . . They lived unknown
 Till persecution dragged them into fame
 And chased them up to heaven.

Task. v. 704.

All we behold is miracle, but seen
 So duly, all is miracle in vain
 What prodigies can power divine perform
 More grand, than it produces year by year ?
 And all in sight of inattentive man !

Task. vi. 118.

Some write a narrative of wars and feats
 Of heroes little known, and call the rant
 An history !

Task. iii. 139.

Meteors from above
 Portentous, unexampled, unexplained,
 Have kindled beacons in the skies

Frowning signals, which bespeak
 Displeasure in his breast who smites the earth
 Or heals it, makes it languish or rejoice.

Task. ii. 57.

There may be (for aught I know) an universal and common spirit to the whole world. . . I am sure there is a common spirit that plays within us, yet makes no part of us; and that is the Spirit of God, the fire and scintillation of that noble and mighty essence which is the life and radical heat of spirits.

Rel. Med. p. 65.

There are singular pieces in the philosophy of Zeno and doctrine of the stoicks which, I perceive, delivered in a pulpit pass for current divinity.

Rel. Med. p. 79.

To perfect virtue, as to religion, there is required a panoplia, or complete armour.

Rel. Med. p. 94.

I was not only before myself, but Adam; that, is in the idea of God and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense I say, the world was before the creation, and at an end before it had a beginning.

Rel. Med. p. 97.

In the cradle of well-ordered polities.

Rel. Med. p. 101.

I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but His that enjoined it.

Rel. Med. p. 101.

I hold that there is a physiognomy, not only of men, but of plants and vegetables. The finger of God hath

One Spirit (his
Who bore the platted thorns with bleeding brows)
Rules universal nature

There lives and works
A soul in all things, and that soul is God
The Lord of all, himself through all diffused,
Sustains and is the life of all that lives.

He feeds the secret fire
By which the mighty process is maintained.

Task. vi. 184. 221. 238.

How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,
Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully, preached !

Task. ii. 539.

Armed in panoply complete
Of heavenly temper.

Task. ii. 345.

In whose thought the world,
Fair as it is, existed ere it was.

Task. v. 798.

In the cradled weakness of the world.

Task. v. 286.

Not for its own sake merely, but for His
Much more who fashioned it, he gives it praise.

Task. v. 800.

Not a flower
But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,

left an inscription upon all his works, not graphical or composed of letters. . . . Delineated by a pencil that never works in vain.

Rel. Med. p. 102.

There was never any thing so like another as in all points to concur ; there will ever some reserved difference slip in to prevent the identity ; without which two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible.

Rel. Med. p. 103.

I have not only seen several countries, beheld the nature of their climes, the chorography of their provinces, topography of their cities, but understood their several laws, customs, and policies ; yet cannot all this persuade the dulness of my spirit unto such an opinion of myself, as I behold in nimbler and conceited heads, that never looked a degree beyond their nests.

Rel. Med. p. 114.

The world that I regard is myself, it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast my eye on ; for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation.

Rel. Med. p. 120.

There is surely a piece of divinity in us, something that was before the elements and owes no homage unto the sun.

Rel. Med. p. 120.

Of his unrivall'd pencil.
 Nature, enchanting nature, in whose form
 And lineaments divine I trace a hand
 That errs not.

Task. vi. 240. iii. 721.

Th' Almighty Maker has throughout
 Discriminated each from each, by strokes
 And touches of his hand with so much art
 Diversified, that two were never found
 Twins at all points.

Task. iv. 734.

He travels and expatiates, as the bee
 From flower to flower, so he from land to land ;
 The manners, customs, policy of all
 Pay contribution to the store he gleans.
 He sucks intelligence in every clime.

Task. iv. 107.

[Where men of judgment creep and feel their way
 The positive pronounce without dismay ,
 Where others toil with philosophic force,
 Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course.

Conversation. Southey's Cowper, v. 8. p. 258.]

Surveying thus at ease
 The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
 To some secure and more than mortal height,
 That liberates and exempts me from them all ;
 It turns, submitted to my view, turns round
 With all its generations.

Task. iv. 94.

There lives and works
 A soul in all things, and that soul is God.

Task. vi. 184.

Let me not injure the felicity of others, if I say I am as happy as any ; ruat cœlum, fiat voluntas tua, salveth all ; so that whatsoever happens it is but what our daily prayers desire.

Rel. Med. p. 120.

Lastly, let us compare the trustful passage at the close of this noble work with the peroration of the fifth book of the Task, and thus part with these two kindred spirits at a moment when they BOTH (to use the language of a THIRD) proclaim.

*The deep, deep joy, of a confiding thought.**

These are, O Lord, the humble desires of my most reasonable ambition, and all I dare call happiness on earth, wherein I set no rule or limit to thy hand or providence ; dispose of me according to the wisdom of thy pleasure. Thy will be done, though in my own undoing !

Rel. Med. p. 127.

* Wordsworth.

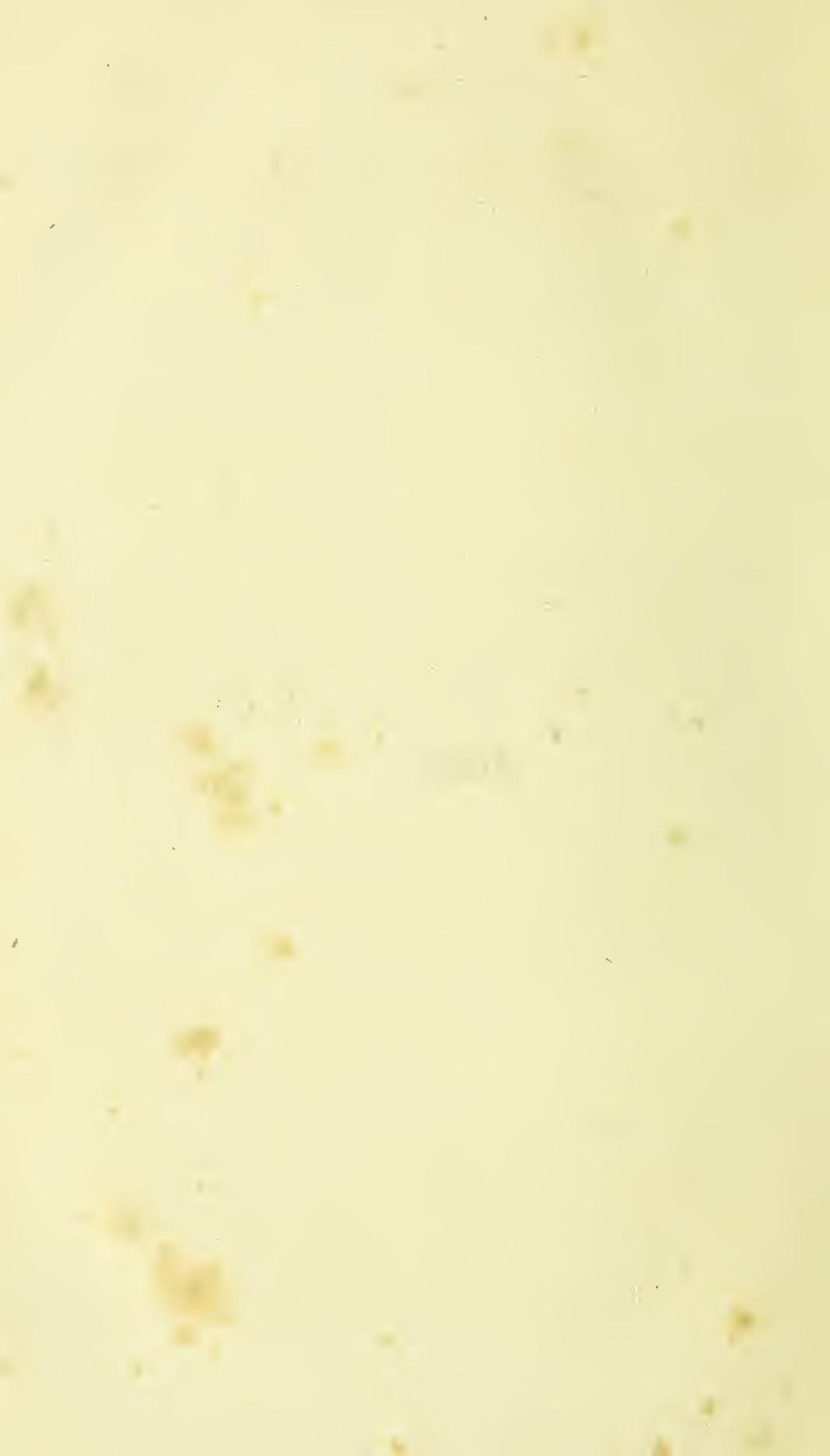
Happy the man who sees a God employed
In all the good and ill that chequer life !
Resolving all events, with their effects
And manifold results, into the will
And arbitration wise of the Supreme.

Task. ii. 161.

But oh, thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown :
Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor,
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away !

Task. v. 903.

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